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POEMS

•The M Co.
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POEMS

MY COUNTRY

WILD EDEN

THE PLAYERS' ELEGY

THE NORTH SHORE WATCH

ODES AND SONNETS

BY

GEORGE EDWARD WOODBERRY

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

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1903

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PREFACE

THE author has here collected all of his published verse, except a fragment, "The Roamer," which he reserves in the hope of completing that poem; and a considerable number of pieces, hitherto either uncollected or unpublished, are also included. The volume represents the passing of many years, and begins from days almost of boyhood. If the result is less than it should have been, there are here some gleanings of time from a life never so fortunate as to permit more than momentary and incidental cultivation of that art which is the chief grace of the intellectual life. The author can claim only that he has written no line except for itself alone.

G. E. W.

BEVERLY, MASSACHUSETTS,
August 13, 1903.

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**MY COUNTRY AND OTHER
POEMS**

At Gibraltar

I

ENGLAND, I stand on thy imperial ground,
Not all a stranger ; as thy bugles blow,
I feel within my blood old battles flow —
The blood whose ancient founts in thee are found.
Still surging dark against the Christian bound
Wide Islam presses ; well its peoples know
Thy heights that watch them wandering below ;
I think how Lucknow heard their gathering sound.
I turn, and meet the cruel, turbaned face.
England, 'tis sweet to be so much thy son !
I feel the conqueror in my blood and race ;
Last night Trafalgar awed me, and to-day
Gibraltar wakened ; hark, thy evening gun
Startles the desert over Africa !

At Gibraltar

II

THOU art the rock of empire, set mid-seas
Between the East and West, that God has built ;
Advance thy Roman borders where thou wilt,
While run thy armies true with His decrees ;
Law, justice, liberty — great gifts are these ;
Watch that they spread where English blood is spilt,
Lest, mixed and sullied with his country's guilt,
The soldier's life-stream flow, and Heaven displease !
Two swords there are : one naked, apt to smite,
Thy blade of war ; and, battle-storied, one
Rejoices in the sheath, and hides from light.
American I am ; would wars were done !
Now westward, look, my country bids good-night —
Peace to the world from ports without a gun !

False Dawn

God dreamt a dream ere the morning woke
Or ever the stars sang out ;
The glory, although it never broke,
Filled heaven with a golden shout ;
And when in the North there's a quiver and beam
Of mystical lights that heavenward stream,
The heart of a boy will dream God's dream.

O Norns, who sit by the pale sea's capes,
Loosen the wonderful shine !
The glamour of God hath a thousand shapes,
And every one divine.
Dartle and listen o'er the blue height ;
Drift and shimmer, flight on flight ;
The heart of a boy is God's delight.

O, clamber and weave with the Milky Way
The Rose in the East that sprang,
From star to star, with blossom and spray,
On heaven's gates to hang !

O Vine of the Morning, cling and climb,
Till the stars like birds in your branches chime !
The heart of a boy is God's springtime.

'Tis Dawn that shadows the glowing roof !

'Tis Light with the Dragon strives !

Ah, Night's black warp with the rainbow-woof
The shuttle of Destiny drives.

They swerve and falter, gather and fly,

Wane, and shiver, and slip from the sky—

O Norns, is the heart of a boy God's lie?

O Childless Ones, would your blind charms

Might seal our darling's eyes !

Dead, with the dead Dawn in his arms,

In the pale north Light lies.

Glimmer and glint, O fallen fire !

The lights of heaven like ghosts expire ;

The heart of a boy is God's desire.

O dream God dreamt ere the morning woke

Or ever the stars sang out ;

O glory diviner than ever broke,

Of the false, false dawn the shout !

FALSE DAWN

7

False dawn, false dawn, false dawn —

Alas, when God shall wake !

False dawn, false dawn, false dawn —

Alas, our young mistake !

False dawn, false dawn, false dawn —

O heart betrayed, break, break !

Love at the Door

WAKEN, love ! the night is dark,
I cannot wander more ;
O love, how canst thou slumber?
I perish at thy door !
O, deep as death thy dream,
Unless thou now awake,
And from the rain and darkness
Me to thy bosom take !


I lie upon the threshold
In the pelting outer storm ;
Yet in my grief-worn body
Love has his mortal form.
Open ! a god shall enter
And on thy eyes shall gaze
The face of the immortals,
Thine after many days.

But if thou wilt not hearken
And rise and open the door,

And yield thy lover pity, —
O, never, nevermore,
Shalt thou hear the voice divinest
Nor unto morning win ;
Dead lies he in thy doorway,
And thou art dead within !

Taormina

GARDENS of olive, gardens of almond, gardens of lemon,
down to the shore,
Terrace on terrace, lost in the hollow ravines where the
stony torrents pour ;
Spurs of the mountain-side thrusting above them rocky
capes in the quiet air,
Silvery-green with thorned vegetation, sprawling lobes of
the prickly pear ;
High up, the eagle-nest, small Mola's ruin, clinging and
hanging over the fall ;
Nobly the lofty, castle-cragged hilltop, famed Taormina,
looketh o'er all.
Southward the purple Mediterranean rounds the far-
shimmering, long-fingered capes ;
Twenty sea-leagues has the light travelled ere out of azure
yon headland it shapes ;
Purple the distance, deep indigo under, save by the beach
the emerald floor,
Save just below where, ever emerging, lakes of mother-of-
pearl drift o'er ;



Deep purple northward, over the Straits, as far as the
long Calabrian blue ;
Front more majestic of sea-mountains nowhere is there
uplifted the whole earth through.
Seaward so vast the prospect envelops one-half of the
world of the wave and the sky ;
Landward the ribbon of hill-slanted orchards blossoming
down from the mountains high ;
Beautiful, mighty ; — yet ever I leave it, lose and forget
it in yon awful clime,
Ætna, out of the sea-floor raising slowly its long-skied
ridge sublime ;
Heavily snow-capped, girdled with forests, Ætna, the
bosom of frost and fire,
Roughened by lava-floods, bossed and sculptured, massive,
immense, alone, entire ;
Clear are the hundred white-coped craters sunk in the
wrinkled winter there ;
Smoke from the summit cloud-like trailing lessens and
swells and drags on the air ;
Ætna, the snow, the fire, the forest, lightning and flood
and ashy gale ;
Terrible out of thy caverns flowing, the burning heaven,
the dark hot hail !

Ætna, the garden-sweet mother of vineyard, corn-tilth,
and fruits that hang from the sky ;
Bee-pastured Ætna ; it charms me, it holds me, it fills
me — than life is it more nigh ;
Till into darkness withdrawn, dense darkness ; and far
below from the deep-set shore
Glimmers the long white surf, and uprises the old
Trinacrian roar.

"Italy, like a Dream"

ITALY, like a dream,
Unfolds before my eyes ;
But another fairer dream
Behind me lies ;
Could I turn from the dream that is
To where that first light flies —
Could I turn from the dream that was —
In a dream life dies !

One masters the spirit of life
Through love of life to be ;
I am not master, O Love, —
Thou slayest the will in me !
Give me the dream that is, —
Earth like heaven to see ;
Or grant the dream that was, —
Love's immortality !

Siena

I

THE DAISIES

ONCE I came to Siena,
Travelling waywardly ;
I sought not church nor palace ;
I did not care to see.
In the little park at Siena,
Her famous ways untrod,
I laid me down in the springtime
Upon the daisied sod.
New, but not unfamiliar,
Of my boyhood seemed the scene —
The hillsides of Judæa,
And Turner's pines between ;
And tenderly the rugged,
Volcanic rock-lands bare,
Warm in the April weather,
Slept in the melting air.
'Twas April in the valleys ;
'Twas April in the sky ;

And from the tufted locusts
The sweet scent wandered by ;
But strange to me the sunshine,
And strange the growing grass ;
To the branch that cannot blossom
How cold doth April pass !
As lovers, when love is over,
Remembering seem men dead,
Down on the warm bright daisies,
Earth's lover, I laid my head ;
And whence or why I know not,
At the touch my eyes were dim,
And I knew that these were the daisies
That Keats felt grow o'er him.

II

CHRIST SCOURGED

I saw in Siena pictures,
Wandering wearily ;
I sought not the names of the masters
Nor the works men care to see ;
But once in a low-ceiled passage
I came on a place of gloom,

Lit here and there with halos
Like saints within the room.
The pure, serene, mild colors
The early artists used
Had made my heart grow softer,
And still on peace I mused.
Sudden I saw the Sufferer,
And my frame was clenched with pain ;
Perchance no throe so noble
Visits my soul again.
Mine were the stripes of the scourging ;
On my thorn-pierced brow blood ran ;
In my breast the deep compassion
Breaking the heart for man.
I drooped with heavy eyelids,
Till evil should have its will ;
On my lips was silence gathered ;
My waiting soul stood still.
I gazed, nor knew I was gazing ;
I trembled, and woke to know
Him whom they worship in heaven
Still walking on earth below.
Once have I borne his sorrows
Beneath the flail of fate !

Once, in the woe of his passion,
I felt the soul grow great !
I turned from my dead Leader ;
I passed the silent door ;
The gray-walled street received me ;
On peace I mused no more.

III

THE RESURRECTION

AFTER days of waiting,
Rambling still elsewhere,
I took the narrow causeway,
Climbed the broad stone stair ;
Round the angle turning
With unlifted gaze
In the high piazza —
O, the wasted days !
There the great cathedral
Came upon my eyes ;
Nevermore may marvel
Bring to me surprise !
In the light of heaven
Builted, heaven's delight,

Never sculptured beauty
Hallowed so my sight !
On the silent curbstone
Long I sat, and gazed,
With the sainted vision
Ever more amazed ;
Rose, and past the curtain
Trod the pictured floor,
Read Siena's story,
Saw her glory's store.
In the high piazza
Once again I turned ;
Clear in heaven's sunlight
Prophet and angel burned.
Still, whene'er that vision
Comes upon my eyes,
I seem to see triumphant
The Resurrection rise.

Forebodings

THE winds and the waves are wailing,
And the night is full of tears ;
And over my spirit forebodings
Are borne from the coming years.

I fear for the child heart in me,
With its oneness of faith and sight,
Lest the glow of its strong endeavor
Go out in the passionate night.

I fear for the swift feet running
Top-speed through the morning dew,
Lest they fail in the burning race-course,
With the goal, unwon, in view.

I fear lest the motive for striving
Is perishing in the strife ;
I fear lest the glory of living
Is darkening in the life.

I fear, and in tears I shiver,
At the feet of coming years ;
The winds and the waves are wailing,
And the night is full of tears.

"Be God's the Hope"

BE God's the Hope ! He built the azure frame ;
He sphered its borders with the walls of flame ;
'Tis His, whose hands have made it, glory or shame
Be God's the Hope !

The Serpent girds the round of earth and sea ;
The Serpent pastures on the precious tree ;
The Serpent, Lord of Paradise is he.
Be God's the Hope !

I thought to slay him. I am vanquishèd.
Heaven needed not my stroke, and I am sped.
Yea, God, thou livest, though thy poor friend be
Be God's the Hope !

Love's Rosary

SWEET names, the rosary of my evening prayer,
Told on my lips like kisses of good night
To friends who go a little from my sight,
And some through distant years shine clear and fair !
So this dear burden that I daily bear
Nightly God taketh, and doth loose me quite ;
And soft I sink in slumbers pure and light
With thoughts of human love and heavenly care.
But when I mark how into shadow slips
My manhood's prime, and weep fast-passing friends,
And heaven's riches making poor my lips,
And think how in the dust love's labor ends,
Then, where the cluster of my hearthstone shone,
" Bid me not live," I sigh, " till all be gone."

At the Funeral of William E. Russell

DEAD ! deaf forever to the people's call,
The fallen leader ; sorrow clouds the state ;
The greatest of the land about his pall
Mourn for the dark reversal of his fate.
But from our eyes, who cherished him o'er all,
And in our boyhood with his heart did mate,
What tears must for this son of Harvard fall
Who kept our early faith inviolate !
Bear him, pale classmates, down the grief-hushed aisle
Who once through shouting thousands, mile on mile,
Rode with proud rein, erect, and happy smile ;
Now bear him, flag-wrapped, down the black defile,
Out at the door, where azure summer blows,
To spaces where the light eternal glows,—
There in the will of God shall he repose :
We to the work through which the people grows.

On a Portrait of Columbus

Was this his face, and these the finding eyes
That plucked a new world from the rolling seas ?
Who, serving Christ, whom most he sought to please,
Willed the great vision till he saw arise
Man's other home and earthly paradise —
His early thought since first with stalwart knees
He pushed the boat from his young olive trees,
And sailed to wrest the secret of the skies ?
He on the waters dared to set his feet,
And through believing planted earth's last race.
What faith in man must in our new world beat,
Thinking how once he saw before his face
The west and all the host of stars retreat
Into the silent infinite of space !

My Country

Who saith that song doth fail?
Or thinks to bound
Within a little plot of Grecian ground
The sole of mortal things that can avail?
Olympus was but heaven's gate ;
Not there the strong Light-bringer deigned to wait ;
But westward o'er the rosy height
His cloud-sprung coursers trample light ;
And ever westward leans the god above the joyful steeds ;
The light in his eyes is prophecy ; on his lips the words
are deeds ;
On whirls the burning Singer ; earth wakens where he
speeds.
The singing keels that moored great Rome
Silence o'ertakes ; but his Immortal Song,
To which the world-wide fates belong,
Still seeks the fleeing shore and for the gods a home,
A new Ausonia sings, swells o'er a mightier foam.
The citadels of Italy —
O dear to him is Liberty ! —

Chained not to her marble mountains,
Sealed not in her broken fountains,
His bright fire ;
Up the dark North it leapt, the masterless desire :
Nor even the Imperial Isle, the Ocean-State,
Who Time's great order leads, and fastens fate,
Shall keep his speed across the shouting sea ;
Destiny exceeds her scope ;
The hope of man exceeds her hope ;
The regions of the west unfold ;
New ages on the god are rolled ;
The throning years to be,
Of earth's new men the praise,
Rise on him where he stands and bends his dreaming
gaze,
And smiles to see the shore night vainly shrouds
Through tracts of ruddy air and darkly gleaming clouds.

Awake, O Land, and lesser fortunes scorn !
Amid the darkness, by the eastern strand,
Bend down thy ear, and hearken with thy hand ;
He comes who brings to thee eternal morn !
More radiant and fair
Than ever thy mornings were,

Or any morn that ever broke from night
Since the dear star of dawn began his earthly flight !
O, whisper to thy clustered isles,
If any rosy promise round them smiles ;
O, call to every seaward promontory,
If one of them, perchance, is made the cape of glory ;
O, bid the mountains answer thy inquire,
If any peak be tipped with lonely fire,
A shining name
And station of the wingèd flame
Above the time's desire !
Doubt not, O waiting Land ; for who hath power
To bar the golden journey of the sun,
Or on time's dial set back the destined hour ?
Doubt not, but O, thy heart within prepare,
And ripen praise upon thy lips with prayer,
When the bright summons through thy frame shall run
Of that great day begun !
Then heaven shall search thee with its shafts of light,
And lay thy coverts and thy fastness bare,
And drag the Serpent from its human lair,
And on its scales the swords of God shall smite,
Wielded aloft by spirits that know to fight,
To find the heart with wounds and not to spare.

O wilderness untried,
If thou dost cherish,
Brought from the old earth's side,
The beasts that perish,
The things that eat the dust and darkly crawl,
And in the heart of nations poison all —
O, terrible that brightness will appall,
World-justice hanging o'er thee, and shall fall !
Seize thy spear and grasp thy sword ;
Speak the righteous word ;
And his battle rolling o'er thee,
And his victory flashing round,
Shall drive the cumbering brood before thee,
Free forevermore thy ground ;
Thy great ally,
Leaning from the sky,
Shall twine thy hair with morning and the olive's warless
crown !
O Soil befriending men,
Pluck from the Future's hand her iron pen ;
While yet his coming lingers, O, stoop down,
And write upon the threshold of thy earth
The word that levels all men in their birth,
And in thy love, and in their spirits' worth !

Be that sign, engraved on thee,
Thy omen and thy destiny !

Look forth, O Land, thy mountain tops
Glitter ; look, the shadow drops ;
On the warder summits hoary
Bursts the splendor-voicèd story ;
Round the crags of watching rolled
The purple vales of heaven unfold,
And far-shining ridges hang in air —
Northward beam, and to the south the promise bear ;
Unto isle and headland sing it,
O'er the misty Midland fling it,
From a hundred glorious peaks, the Appalachian gold !
O'er the valley of the thousand rivers,
O'er the sea-horized lakes,
Through heaven's wide gulf the marvellous fire quivers,
Myriad-winged, and every dwindling star o'ertakes ;
On where earth's last ranges listen,
Thunder-peaks that cloud the west
With the flashing signal waken ;
All the tameless Rockies own it —
One great edge of sunrise glisten ;
All the skied Sierras throne it ;

And lone Shasta, high uplifted
O'er the snowy centuries drifted,
Hears, and through his lands is splendor shaken
From the morning's jewel in his crest !
O chosen Land,
God's hand
Doth touch thy spires,
And lights on all thy hills his rousing fires !
O beacon of the nations, lift thy head ;
Firm be thy bases under ;
Now thy earth-might with heaven wed
Beyond hell's hate to sunder !
O Land of Promise, whom all eyes
Have strained through time to see,
Since poets, cradled in the skies,
Flashed prophecy on thee !
O great Atlantis, other world,
That never voyager won,
Though many a shining sail was furled,
Lost in the setting sun !
Joy, joy, joy ! thy destiny hath found thee !
Now the oceans brighten round thee,
To thy heaven-born fate ascending ;
Thou, earth's darling ! thou, the yearning

MY COUNTRY


Of the last hope in her burning,
Who shalt seal her womb forevermore !
Child, whose rosy breath is blending
With the morning's, o'er thee bending,
While the chorus, never ending,
Swells from shore to shore —
Triumph of the peoples, anthem never heard before !
Thou, the crowner of the ages,
Now the eagle seeks thy hand ;
Poets, statesmen, heroes, sages,
In the long-drawn portals stand !
Well may mount to mount declare thee ;
Ocean unto ocean sound thee ;
To the skies loud hymns upbear thee ;
Earth embrace, and heaven bound thee ;
God hath found thee !
Through the world the tidings pour,
And fill it o'er and o'er,
As the wave of morning fills the long Atlantic
shore ;
Fills, and brims — O speed the story ! —
The emerald cup of thy great river-gods ;
Brims, and through the west down golden sods
To the Pacific rolls ; flood unto flood speaks glory !

MY COUNTRY

31

O Fair Land, do thy eyes
Dream paradise?
Or mortal fields are these, or fallen skies?
Dost thou not hear Him singing in the gold
The lofty pæan thy long years unfold,
And joy divine that shines in man's just praise,
Though yet awhile delays
The hour full-orbed, and his unclouded blaze?
Of holy hymns and famous deeds
He casts before the deathless seeds;
He wooes thy dust with rosy rain;
Of thy sweet months is he so fain;
More lovelier than the poets told,
He wreathes his brow to light thy dying mould!
And from their morning bower and from their sunny
 lair,
He scatters the bloom that springs
In heavenly pastures fair
And o'er thy bosom flings
The fragrance of his own immortal air!
Or flowers alone are his, but every fruit
That takes the breath of heaven fed from a darkened
 root;
Why to thy virgin soil that spring shall thrill and shoot!

Like Love, its coming sweet,
With motions of auroral winds that fleet,
Shadow and music, o'er the new green wheat ;
Thy summer lights the land, thy autumn loads the
 sea ;
And still a lovelier year returns to thee ;
Or where the glowing South is white like wool ;
Or where the sun-spanned ocean of the maize
Broods in the brilliant calm, and lightly sways ;
Or where by inland seas, forever full,
The golden reservoirs of summer days,
Towers of abundance stand in all thy ways ;
Or further on, where bud and fruit together,
Immortal orchards, star the fadeless weather.
O generous fertility,
Like Love, to all men free !
And ever rolls an ampler year, and heaven grows ripe in
 thee !
For nobler yields than these,
O favored Land,
Are whispering with thy breeze —
The tillage of God's hand ;
And though it seem thy own, this fair estate
(Or fief or freehold, ask of Day and Night),




The Eternal only sows the field of fate,
And o'er thy will doth exercise His right.
Thou canst not groove the soil nor turn the sod
But thou shalt drop therein the seeds of time ;
Thy labor brings to light the will of God ;
Fair must the harvest be, and stand sublime ;
And when the mellowing year is made complete,
And for the world thou reapest time's increase,
He thrusts His sickle in the heavy wheat,
And in thy bursting granaries garners Peace.

O humbly bow thee down,
Blessèd o'er all thou art ;
Earth's plenty in thy crown,
God's Peace within thy heart !
Again, O mighty hymn, begin !
O mount, Virgilian song !
Let be the suffering and the sin ;
Thy years to Love belong !
No Janus-stables on thy soil, nor hoof of Mars's steeds ;
No ruin smokes ; no war-bolt strikes ; no scar of battle
 bleeds ;
But fair as once Athene's height thy marble hill shall rise,
Where Justice reconciles thy earth, Virtue disarms thy skies !

As splendors of the dawn
Make earthly tapers wan,
Less than a candle's beam
The world's first hope shall gleam
When o'er thy vales and soothèd seas the truce of time
shall stream !
Come ! come ! O light divine !
O come, Saturnian morn !
O Land of Peace on whom recline
Ten thousand hopes unborn —
O Beautiful, stand forth, nor sword, nor lance,
Silent wielder of the fates !
War-tamer, striking with thy glance
The thunder from imperial states !
So hard, surpassing war, doth Peace assail ;
So far, exceeding hate, doth Love avail ;
Now, married to thy sphere,
Blessèd between the nodding poles shall wheel the earth's
Great Year.

O destined Land, unto thy citadel,
What founding fates even now doth peace compel,
That through the world thy name is sweet to tell !
O thronèd Freedom, unto thee is brought




Empire ; nor falsehood nor blood-payment asked ;
Who never through deceit thy ends hast sought,
Nor toiling millions for ambition tasked ;
Unlike the fools who build the throne
On fraud, and wrong, and woe ;
For man at last will take his own,
Nor count the overthrow ;
But far from these is set thy continent,
Nor fears the Revolution in man's rise ;
On laws that with the weal of all consent,
And saving truths that make the people wise :
For thou art founded in the eternal fact
That every man doth greaten with the act
Of freedom ; and doth strengthen with the weight
Of duty ; and diviner moulds his fate,
By sharp experience taught the thing he lacked,
God's pupil ; thy large maxim framed, though late,
Who masters best himself best serves the State.
This wisdom is thy Corner : next the stone
Of Bounty ; thou hast given all ; thy store,
Free as the air, and broadcast as the light,
Thou flingest ; and the fair and gracious sight,
More rich, doth teach thy sons this happy lore :
That no man lives who takes not priceless gifts

Both of thy substance and thy laws, whereto
He may not plead desert, but holds of thee
A childhood title, shared with all who grew,
His brethren of the hearth ; whence no man lifts
Above the common right his claim ; nor dares
To fence his pastures of the common good ;
For common are thy fields ; common the toil ;
Common the charter of prosperity,
That gives to each that all may blessèd be.
This is the very counsel of thy soil.
Therefore if any thrive, mean-souled he spares
The alms he took ; let him not think subdued
The State's first law, that civic rights are strong
But while the fruits of all to all belong ;
Although he heir the fortune of the earth,
Let him not hoard, nor spend it for his mirth,
But match his private means with public worth.
That man in whom the people's riches lie
Is the great citizen, in his country's eye.
Justice, the third great base, that shall secure
To each his earnings, howsoever poor,
From each his duties, howsoever great.
She bids the future for the past atone.
Behold her symbols on the hoary stone —

The awful scales and that war-hammered beam
Which whoso thinks to break doth fondly dream,
Or Czars who tyrannize or mobs that rage;
These are her charge, and heaven's eternal law.
She from old fountains doth new judgment draw,
Till, word by word, the ancient order swerves
To the true course more nigh ; in every age
A little she creates, but more preserves.
Hope stands the last, a mighty prop of fate.
These thy foundations are, O firm-set State !
And strength is unto thee
More than this masonry
Of common thought ;
Beyond the stars, from the Far City brought.
Pillar and tower
Declare the shaping power,
Massive, severe, sublime,
Of the stern, righteous time,
From sire to son bequeathed, thy eldest dower.
Large-limbed they were, the pioneers,
Cast in the iron mould that fate reveres ;
They could not help but frame the fabric well,
Who squared the stones for heaven's eye to tell ;
Who knew from eld and taught posterity,

Be that sign, engraved on thee,
Thy omen and thy destiny !


Look forth, O Land, thy mountain tops
Glitter ; look, the shadow drops ;
On the warder summits hoary
Bursts the splendor-voiced story ;
Round the crags of watching rolled
The purple vales of heaven unfold,
And far-shining ridges hang in air —
Northward beam, and to the south the promise be
Unto isle and headland sing it,
O'er the misty Midland fling it,
From a hundred glorious peaks, the Appalachian
O'er the valley of the thousand rivers,
O'er the sea-horized lakes,
Through heaven's wide gulf the marvellous fire qu
Myriad-winged, and every dwindling star o'ertake
On where earth's last ranges listen,
Thunder-peaks that cloud the west
With the flashing signal waken ;
All the tameless Rockies own it —
One great edge of sunrise glisten ;
All the skied Sierras throne it ;



His kingdom is thy conquering sphere,
His will thy ruling rod !
O Harbor of the sea-tossed fates,
The last great mortal Bound ;
Cybele, with a hundred States,
A hundred turrets, crowned ;
Mother, whose heart divinely holds
Earth's poor within her breast ;
World-Shelterer, in whose open folds
The wandering races rest ;
Advance, the hour supreme arrives ;
O'er Ocean's edge the chariot drives ;
The past is done ;
Thy orb begun ;
Upon the forehead of the world to blaze,
Lighting all times to be with thy own golden days.

O Land beloved !
My Country, dear, my own !
May the young heart that moved
For the weak words atone ;
The mighty lyre not mine, nor the full breath of song !
To happier sons shall these belong.

Yet doth the first and lonely voice
Of the dark dawn the heart rejoice,
While still the loud choir sleeps upon the bough ;
And never greater love salutes thy brow
Than his, who seeks thee now.
Alien the sea and salt the foam
Where'er it bears him from his home ;
And when he leaps to land,
A lover treads the strand ;
Precious is every stone ;
No little inch of all the broad domain
But he would stoop to kiss, and end his pain,
Feeling thy lips make merry with his own ;
But O, his trembling reed too frail
To bear thee Time's All-Hail !
Faint is my heart, and ebbing with the passion of thy
praise !
The poets come who cannot fail ;
Happy are they who sing thy perfect days !
Happy am I who see the long night ended,
In the shadows of the age that bore me,
All the hopes of mankind blending,
Earth awaking, heaven descending,
While the new day steadfastly



MY COUNTRY

41

Domes the blue deeps over thee !
Happy am I who see the Vision splendid
In the glowing of the dawn before me,
All the grace of heaven blending,
Man arising, Christ descending,
While God's hand in secrecy
Builds thy bright eternity.

America and England in Danger of War**I**

HAST thou forgot the breasts that gave us suck,
And whence our likeness to our fathers came,
Though from our arms twice stooping with the same
Great blow that Runnymede and Naseby struck ?
Out of thy heart the imperial spark we pluck
Which in our blood is breaking into flame ;
O, of one honor make not double shame ;
Give not the English race to fortune's luck !
Thy reef of war across our seaboard thrown,
Fortress and arsenal against us stored —
Trust not in them ! the awful summons blown,
High o'er our long sea-blaze and battle poured
Through all the marches of the open North,
On arms uplifted thy First-born rides forth.

America and England in Danger of War

II

MOTHER of nations, of them eldest we,
Well is it found, and happy for the state,
When that which makes men proud first makes them
 great,
And such our fortune is who sprang from thee,
And brought to this new land from over sea
The faith that can with every household mate,
And freedom whereof law is magistrate,
And thoughts that make men brave, and leave them free.
O Mother of our faith, our law, our lore,
What shall we answer thee if thou shouldst ask
How this fair birthright doth in us increase?
There is no home but Christ is at the door ;
Freely our toiling millions choose life's task ;
Justice we love, and next to justice peace.

America and England in Danger of War**III**

WHAT is the strength of England, and her pride
Among the nations, when she makes her boast?
Has the East heard it, where her far-flung host
Hangs like a javelin in India's side?
Does the sea know it, where her navies ride,
Like towers of stars, about the silver coast,
Or from the great Capes to the uttermost
Parts of the North like ocean meteors glide?
Answer, O South, if yet where Gordon sank,
Spent arrow of the far and lone Soudan,
There comes a whisper out of wasted death !
O every ocean, every land, that drank
The blood of England, answer, if ye can,
What is it that giveth her immortal breath?

America and England in Danger of War

IV

THEN the West answered : " Is the sword's keen edge
Like to the mind for sharpness? Doth the flame
Devour like thought? Many with chariots came,
Squadron and phalanx, legion, square, and wedge ;
They mounted up ; they wound from ledge to ledge
Of battle-glory dark with battle-shame ;
But God hath hurled them from the heights of fame
Who from the soul took no eternal pledge.
Because above her people and her throne
She hath erected reason's sovereignty ;
Because wherever human speech is known
The touch of English breath doth make thought free ;
Therefore forever is her glory blown
About the hills, and flashed beneath the sea."

America and England in Danger of War

V

FIRST of mankind bid we our eagles pause
Before the pure tribunal of the mind,
Where swordless justice shall the sentence find,
And righteous reason arbitrate the cause !
First of mankind, whom yet no power o'erawes,
One kin let us confederate and bind ;
Let the great instrument be made and signed,
The mould and pattern of earth's mightier laws !
Crown with this act the thousand years of thought,
O English Race, and wheresoever roams
Thy sea-flown brood, and bulwarked states has wrought
Far as the loneliest wave of ocean foams,
Thy children's love with veneration brought
Shall warm thy hearthstone from their million homes.

"Will it be so?"

WHILE I remember
Dost thou forget,
Where by the home-ember
I see thee yet?
Or dost thou miss only
The friend from thy side,
While I am lonely
Life-long for my bride ?

When we met, when we parted,
Was it mine, not thy hand,
That trembled and started
At love's demand?
Mine only the rapture
Unshared, and the pain
Till thought could recapture
Thy presence again?

Was it all heart's delusion
When each warm breath,

Caught with confusion,
Told life, told death ?
Though choked was my story,
Though scattered my power,
Wert thou blind to the glory
Of love's one hour ?

Wert thou not maiden
To feel the soul-touch
Of the spirit love-laden
That loved too much ?
If late thou shouldst waken,
If late thou shouldst know,
Forgotten, forsaken—
Will it be so ?

In the Square of St. Peter's

How brave with heaven St. Peter's fountain copes,
And sheds the rainbow round, and silvers all !
Man's heart is such a fountain ; so his hopes
The rainbow shed, and through the rainbow fall.

Near Balæ

O, tender are the gods, and deep their scorn,
Who write their wisdom on the child's new heart !
The temple that saluted them at morn,
Ruined and bare, silent they let depart.

Man : Written at Ravenna

A STRANGER to earth's lands,
A suppliant to her years,
He claps his childish hands,
He drops his boyish tears.
At last life's hope appears ;
For gold he sifts the sands,
For truth he charts the spheres.
Earth takes his shrivelled hands,
Shuts eyes too old for tears ;
Earth, weary in all her lands
And dumb through all her years.



" Nay, Soul "

NAY, Soul, so travel-worn,
Begging from door to door,
Forever beggared more
And sickening with self-scorn,
Art thou so poor, thou born
Of all the times before?

Who heeds thy dumb demands?
Thy passion or thy fears?
Though thou hast wet with tears
Beloved and alien hands,
Thy want who understands?
Thy misery who reveres?

Nay, Soul, thy shame forbear !
Between the earth and sky
Was never man could buy
The bread of life with prayer,
Not though his brother there
Saw him with hunger die.

“NAY, SOUL”

His life a man may give ;
But not for deepest ruth
Beauty, nor love, nor truth,
Whereby himself doth live.
Come home, poor fugitive !
Art thou so poor, forsooth ?

One justice has been done
To all who draw life's breath ;
Thee heaven encompasseth,
And the impartial sun
Now as in Babylon
Lights up the way to death.

Is not the world thy own,
Whole as in Plato's mind ?
Know surely thou must find
Therein thyself alone
The archetype unknown,
Or be forever blind.

Thy past — there may thy eyes,
As Dante's, well in well,
Travel the slopes of hell ;

There see thy angels rise
Where, choir in choir, they dwell
Round God, like folded skies.

Thy heart — look thou aright !
Fear not the wild untrod,
Nor birth, nor burial sod !
Look, and in native light,
Bare as to Christ's own sight,
Living shalt thou see God.

Nay, Soul, what mockery this,
To have so vainly striven,
Knocking at earth and heaven
For largess of the bliss
That in thy being is,
And with thy birth was given.

In thy own self ascend ;
Cast staff and scrip away ;
Leave to the dead decay,
The living to their end ;
Leave poet, priest, and friend ;
Thou shalt find peace to-day.

**On the Hundredth Anniversary of the French
Revolution**

SHE matched the world in arms against man's right,
And when the Fates would stay victorious France,
With her own conquests must they dull her lance,
And legions worn with fadeless battles smite.
O laughter at the shocks of time, her might
Rejoiced in more than arms ! the great advance
Through Europe of her triple ordinance
Man owes to her. — O Century, born to-night,
Fulfil her glory ! Europe still hath slaves,
Scourged by the Turk, mown by the Scythian car ;
Siberia, more rich in heroes' graves
Than the most famous field of glorious war,
Yet waits ; and by the bloody Cretan waves
Man suffers hope, and pleads his woe afar.



**To the Roman Pontiff on the Discipline of
Father McGlynn**

THE German tyrant plays thee for his game ;
Italy curbs thee ; France gives little rest ;
And o'er the broad sea dost thou think to tame
God's young plantation in the virgin West ?
Three kingdoms did He sift to find the seed,
And sowed ; then open threw the sea's wide door ;
And millions came, used but to starve and bleed,
And built the great republic of the poor.
Remember Dover Strait that shore from thee
Whole empires, hidden in the banked-up clouds
Of England's greatness ! Of all lands are we,
But chiefly northmen ; still their might unshrouds
The fates ; dream not their children of this sod
Cease to be freemen when they bow to God !

Our First Century

It cannot be that men who are the seed
Of Washington should miss fame's true applause ;
Franklin did plan us ; Marshall gave us laws ;
And slow the broad scroll grew a people's creed —
Union and Liberty ! then at our need,
Time's challenge coming, Lincoln gave it pause,
Upheld the double pillars of the cause,
And dying left them whole — our crowning deed.
Such was the fathering race that made all fast,
Who founded us, and spread from sea to sea
A thousand leagues the zone of liberty,
And built for man this refuge from his past,
Unkinged, unchurched, unsoldiered ; shamed were
Failing the stature that such sires forecast !

**To Those who reprobed the Author for too
Sanguine Patriotism**

THE riches of a nation are her dead
Whom she hath borne to be her memory
Against her passing, when that time shall be,
And in the Cæsars' tomb she makes her bed ;
And oft of such decay in books I've read —
Carthage or Venice, who had wealth as we ;
Yet, all too wise for patriots, blame not me !
I know a nation's gold is not man's bread.
But rather from itself the heart infers
That ached when Lincoln died ! those boyish tears
Still keep my breast untraitored by its fears ;
Farragut, Phillips, Grant — I saw them shine,
Names worthy to have filled old Virgil's line ;
If I prove false, it is the future errs.

Shelley's house

THOU, last, O Lerice, receive my song :
Ilex and olive on the gleaming steep
Gray-green, descend to kiss the brilliant deep
Beautiful with clear winds ; the golden leap
Of the far-snowing blue, with hornèd sweep,
Pours to yon purple sea-valley asleep,
Between fair mountains locked ; and noon's high blaze
Turns to one melting sapphire all light's rays,
Wherein the wild wind blows, the wild wave strays,
While ocean from his azure censer sprays
Each scarlet poppy that the shore embays
Mid thickets of the rose ; and all day long
The nightingales are waking, loud and strong,
Warbling unseen their unremitting song
Round Shelley's house, lest here I suffer wrong,
This day that gave me birth, pierced by the prong
Of absence, misery, loss ; and, lest I weep,
Color and light and music round me keep
Life's crystal, and this day of all my days
To be a temple of the soul upraise,

Where I may breathe and throb and muse, and long
Brood on the loves that to my bosom throng ;
And from these splendors of earth, sea, and air,
Like Uriel issuing from the glorious sphere
That hides him with great beauty, everywhere
I feel the might of song that once dwelt here,
A shadow of loveliness approaching near,
A fragrance in the unseen atmosphere,
An intimate presence in the darkness dear ;
I see, and see not ! O, the sweet, the fair
Melodious death my sea-borne soul should bear
With yon blue waters whelmed, to meet him there,
My poet ! — yet rather life to me belong ! —
Sing, nightingales, flood the blind world with song !

WILD EDEN

WILD EDEN

He ate the Laurel and is Mad

Is it a dream that the world is fair?
And the voice in my blood's melodious beat, —
Is it only in dreams heard smooth and fleet?
Lightly singing, "Somewhere, somewhere,
There is one who shall make thy whole life sweet,
Making all beautiful things complete
With the fairest of things found fair!"

I drank at dawn the Muses' breath;
In boyhood's blossom and flood
I bit the laurel; I know till death
Its poison will flow in my blood.
Into my speech a glory slips;
A throbbing pains my side;
One is the breath of the Muses' lips;
One is the laurel — woe betide!
All day my perilous pulses keep
A music sweeter than the spheres;

All day, all night, heart-high they leap,
They witch my eyes with hopes and fears.
I bit the laurel so deep, so deep,
That every lovely thing appears
A spirit clad in maidenhood, —
The glamour flies on Dian's foot,
And music rushes through the wood.
So long I ate Apollo's root,
There shooteth through me, blood and brain,
A burning bliss, by day, by night, —
Here — there — her face ! — if love be pain,
'Tis pain exceeding all delight !
For who the laurel-madness hath
Shall hold the vision-haunted path,
Searching with song the whole world through,
Where spreads the green, where rolls the blue.
A maiden draws me, feet and eyes,
The way by happy lovers ranged ;
And, maiden-touched, my sweet youth dies
To sweeter manhood, maiden-changed.
Though I be mad, I shall not wake ;
I shall not fall to common sight ;
Only the god himself may take
This music out of my blood, this glory out of my b

This lift, this rapture, this singing might,
And love that outlasts death.

I shall go singing, blood and brain,
I shall make music of voice and lyre,
Triumphs of sorrow, pæans of pain,
And at every fall shall the song leap higher ;
Whether through Love victorious made,
Or in his victories victim-laid,
Him will I praise, whatever fates are,
On my lips the flower, in my eyes the star,
My heart his passion, my soul his flame, —
Love, our divine and intimate lord,
Who out of the infinite, all-adored,
Into the heart of nature came,
With splendor of ten million suns ;
And instant back his longing runs
Through bud and billow, through drift and blaze,
Through thought, through prayer, the thousand
ways
The spirit journeys from despair ;
He sees all things that they are fair,
But feels them as the daisied sod, —
This slumbrous beauty, this light, this room,

The chrysalis and broken tomb
He cleaveth on his way to God.

I shall go singing over-seas :
“The million years of the planet’s increase,
All pangs of death, all cries of birth,
Are clasped at one by the heart of the earth.”

I shall go singing by tower and town :
“The thousand cities of men that crown
Empire slow-rising from horde and clan
Are clasped at one by the heart of man.”

I shall go singing by flower and brier :
“The multitudinous stars of fire,
And man made infinite under the sod,
Are clasped at one by the heart of God.”

I shall go singing up ice and snow :
“Blow soon, dread angel, greatly blow,
Break up, ye gulfs, beneath, above,
Peal, time’s last music, — ‘love, love, love’ !”

And wheresoever my feet shall rest,
The place shall be named of the lovers’ guest ;

And where in the night I journey on,
The place shall be called of the lover gone ;
My life shall be as a sweet song sung,
My death as a knell by maidens rung,
Lightly singing, "Somewhere, somewhere,
There is one to make thy whole life sweet,
Making all beautiful things complete
With the fairest of things found fair !"
And before the silence wholly fall,
Faintly shall soft echoes call,
Syllabling some heavenly air,
As if my spirit lingered there —
"Found fair — found fair — found fair !"

Flower before the Leaf

I

FLOWER before the leaf, boy-loved Rhodora,
Morning-pink along the valley of the birch and maple ;
Now the green begins to cling about the silver birches ;
Burst the maples ; reddens yonder hillside ;
Sudden as the babbling brook or robin's whistle,
Spring-swift, thou art come in the old places,
In the hollow swamp-land, bloom on brake !

Flower before the leaf !
Ah, once here in the sweet season —
Flash of blue wings, birds in chorus,
Ere the violet, ere the wild-rose,
While the linden lingered and the elm tree —
Years ago a boy's heart broke in blossom,
Flower before the leaf,
While he wandered down the valley loving you ;
And above him, and around him,
Beam and gleam and distant color,
Waiting, waiting, hung the Spirit
To rush forth upon the world.

II

SOMEWHERE in the years of the dawn did I dream that a
youth all boy-like stands? —

And the tender Rhodora's bloom, the first of the year, is
red in his pure, sweet hands;

And in the doorway bending, dark-haired, bright-cheeked,
a girlish form appears, —

A word, a smile, a blush, and out of the blue a black
bird downward steers, —

And all the spirits rush to his heart, and the fragrant
world, save her, turns dim,

The flowering of whose face was the glory of spring
through the years of the dawn to him !

Wild Eden

THERE is a garden enclosed
In the high places,
But never hath love reposed
In its bowery spaces ;
And the cedars there like shadows
O'er the moonlit champaign stand
Till light like an angel's hand
Touches Wild Eden.

Who told me the name of the garden
That lieth remote, apart,
I know not, nor whence was the music
That sang it into my heart ;
But just as the loud robin tosses
His notes from the elm tops high,
As the violets come in the mosses
When south winds wake and sigh,
So on my lips I found it,
This name that is made my cry.

There, under the stars and the dawns
Of the virginal valleys,
White lilies flood the low lawns
And the rose lights the alleys ;
But never are heard there the voices
That sweeten on lovers' lips,
And the wild bee never sips
Sweets of Wild Eden.

But who hath shown me the vision
Of the roses and lilies in ranks
I would that I knew, that forever
To him I might render thanks ;
For a maiden grows there in her blossom,
In the place of her maidenhood,
Nor knows how her virgin bosom
Is stored with the giving of good,
For the truth is hidden from her
That of love is understood.

No bird with his mate there hovers,
Nor beside her has trilled or sung ;
No bird in the dewy covers
Has built a nest for his young ;

And over the dark-leaved mountains
The voice in the laurel sleeps ;
And the moon broods on the deeps
Shut in Wild Eden.

O Love, if thou in thy hiding
Art he who above me stands,
If thou givest wings to my spirit,
If thou art my heart and my hands, —
Through the morn, through the noon, through the even
That burns with thy planet of light,
Through the moonlit space of heaven,
Guide thou my flight
Till, star-like on the dark garden,
I fall in the night !

Fly, song of my bosom, unto it
Wherever the earth breathes spring ;
Though a thousand years were to rue it,
Such a heart beats under thy wing,
Thou shalt dive, thou shalt soar, thou shalt find it,
And forever my life be blest,
Such a heart beats in my breast, —
Fly to Wild Eden !

The Birth of Love

'Tis joy to feel the spirit leap
Angelic from its childhood sleep,
Pure as a star, fair as a flower,
Eager with youth's unblasted power ;
Where every sense gives soft consent,
To burst into love's element ;
To be all touch, all eye, all ear,
And pass into love's burning sphere.

“ When first I saw her ”

WHEN first I saw her, at the stroke
The heart of nature in me spoke ;
The very landscape smiled more sweet,
Lit by her eyes, pressed by her feet ;
She made the stars of heaven more bright
By sleeping under them at night ;
And fairer made the flowers of May
By being lovelier than they.

O, soft, soft, where the sunshine spread,
Dark in the grass I laid my head ;
And let the lights of earth depart
To find her image in my heart ;
Then through my being came and went
Tones of some heavenly instrument,
As if where its blind motions roll
This world should wake and be a soul.

The Secret

NIGHTINGALES warble about it

All night under blossom and star ;

The wild swan is dying without it,

And the eagle crieth afar ;

The sun, he doth mount but to find it,

Searching the green earth o'er ;

But more doth a man's heart mind it —

O more, more, more !

Over the gray leagues of ocean

The infinite yearneth alone ;

The forests with wandering emotion

The thing they know not intone ;

Creation arose but to see it,

A million lamps in the blue ;

But a lover, he shall be it,

If one sweet maid is true.

“O, Inexpressible as Sweet”

O, INEXPRESSIBLE as sweet,
Love takes my voice away ;
I cannot tell thee when we meet
What most I long to say.

But hadst thou hearing in thy heart
To know what beats in mine,
Then shouldst thou walk, where'er thou
In melodies divine.

So warbling birds lift higher notes
Than to our ears belong ;
The music fills their throbbing throats,
But silence steals the song.

The Sea-shell

My love o'erflows with joy divine
The ocean-girdled hills ;
And with my breath each blowing pine
And combing breaker fills ;
The shadows of my spirit move
The far, blue coast along,
Where of wild beauty first I wove
The rainbow woof of song ;
On these great beaches of the North
My voices shoreward roll,
And when the blessed stars come forth,
All heaven is made my scroll.

I take the wings of morn ; I soar
Above the ocean plain ;
From fountains of the sun I pour
My passion's golden rain ;
And when black tempest heaven shrouds,
On eastern thunders far

I show the rainbow in the clouds,
And give the West her star ;
Soft blow the winds o'er fallen showers,
And, cool with fragrance, sleep
Lies breathing through the chambered hour
I only wake and weep.

O mystic Love ! that so can take
The bright world in thy hands,
And its imprisoned spirits make
Murmur at thy commands ;
As if, in truth, this orb of law
Were but thy reed-hung nest,
Woven by Time of sticks and straw
To house the summer guest ;
And so to me the starry sphere
Is but love's frail sea-shell ;
O, might she press it to her ear,
What would its murmurs tell !

The Rose of Stars

WHEN Love, our great Immortal,
Put on mortality,
And down from Eden's portal
Brought this sweet life to be,
At the sublime archangel
He laughed with veiled eyes,
For he bore within his bosom
The seed of Paradise.

He hid it in his bosom,
And there such warmth it found,
It brake in bud and blossom,
And the rose fell on the ground ;
As the green light on the prairie,
As the red light on the sea,
Through fragrant belts of summer
Came this sweet life to be.


And the grave archangel seeing
Spread his mighty wings for flight,

But the glow hung round him fleeing
Like the rose of an Arctic night ;
And sadly moving heavenward
By Venus and by Mars,
He heard the joyful planets
Hail Earth, the Rose of Stars.

The Rose Bower

A CRIMSON bower the garden glows,
In overhanging noon, intense and bare,
Enisled and bathed in silence and repose,
As it were mirrored on the azure air ;
All molten lies the faint blue-shimmering deep,
Impalpably transparent, smooth with light ;
Far in the fragrant pines the hot winds sleep ;
And nothing moves, and all dark things are bright.
Yet is this fair round of tranquillity,
This swathe of color, wheresoe'er it be,
The burning shell of elemental strife ;
And never yet so fleeting seemed sweet life ;
So fragile this thin film of human eyes,
In whose slight orb are springtime and sunrise ;
So perishable this incandescent frame,
Lone Nature's inextinguishable pyre
Of transitory loveliness and bliss, —
This undulating and eternal flame
Of beauty burning in its perfumed fire,
And passion dying in its tropic kiss.

Even now the sweet-hued vision sinks away,
And from these bathing flames of night and day,
As in my hour to come it soon may seem
When fades to ashes earth's majestic dream,
My soul springs up erect, alone, supreme,
And, passing from this glory, doth survey,
As some spent meteor's low and dying gleam,
This radiant life that burns all else away,
Consuming its own star ; a moment, where
About my feet morning and evening flare,
My spirit gazes, still a stranger there,
On this dear human home, so sweet, so fair,
Nor yet unfolds aloft eternal wings.
Then slowly lapsing into sensuous things,
Once more do I inhale this glorious light,
Breathe the soft air and feel the flowering earth,
And on me comes the everlasting sea,
Purple horizons, emerald-hanging woods,
The rose bower, and love's blissful solitudes,
Where voices of eternity
Have wandered from my birth,
And nothing save love's mystery
Shines with immortal worth.



The Message

So fair the world about me lies,
So pure is heaven above,
Ere so much beauty dies
I would give a gift to my love ;
Now, ere the long day close,
That has been so full of bliss,
I will send to my love the rose,
In its leaves I will shut a kiss ;
A rose in the night to perish,
A kiss through life to cherish ;
Now, ere the night-wind blows,
I will send unto her the rose.

The Rose

O LOVE's star over Eden,
How pale and faint thou art !
Now lost, now seen above,
Thy white rays point and dart.
O, liquid o'er her move,
Shine out and take my part !
I have sent her the rose of love,
And shut in the rose is my heart.

The fireflies glitter and rush
In the dark of the summer mead ;
Pale on the hawthorn bush,
Bright on the larkspur seed ;
And long is heaven aflush
To give my rose god-speed ;
If she breathe a kiss, it will blush ;
If she bruise a leaf, it will bleed.

O bright star over Eden,
All beautiful thou art ;

To-day, in the rose, the rose,
For my love I have perilled my heart ;
Now, ere the dying glows
From the placid isles depart,
The rose-bathed planet knows
It is hers, my rose, my heart !

The Lober

COME down, my love, from Eden,
For there all things decay,
Since in his youthful bosom .
Love bore the seed away ;
Now leave the loveless garden,
And I will be thy guide
To that world where thy lover
Shall never leave thy side.

Come, love ; in that new country
The rose shall be thy part,
And many a darling blossom
Shall press against thy heart ;
In a lily whiter, sweeter
Love shall treasure up thy gold ;
Lily and rose together
Thou to thy breast shalt fold.

Come, love ; my heart is burning
To reach unto thy hand ;

Come, love ; my soul is yearning
For that mystical new land ;
Now where thy eyes are bending
Mayst thou thy lover see
Midway the height ascending
That leadeth up to thee.

The Weather-spirit

A VOICE in the roaring pine wood,
A voice in the breaking sea,
A voice in the storm-red morning,
That will not let me be.

It is calling me to the forest,
It is calling me to the strand,
The Weather-spirit is calling me
To fare over sea and land.

Till my cheek with the rain is stinging,
And my hand is wet with the spray,
There is that within my bosom
Which will not let me stay.

Might in the pine wood tossing,
Might on the racing sea,
The Weather-spirit, my brother,
Is calling, calling, to me.

Love's Castaway

ON isle and crag the wild-rose blooms
Above the purple wave ;
Its lonely beauty lights the glooms
Of many a sailor-grave.
Sad thought ! but oft the ocean-strain,
That wanders in my blood,
Works in the meditative brain
Some wild mysterious mood ;
I leave the summer's pine-soft track ;
From all of earth I flee ;
And on dark tides my soul turns back
And draweth out to sea ;
And oft this flower of wilding song,
That on the gray crag grew,
Amid the sea-winds safe from wrong,
And fed with rain and dew,
Seems but the wild-rose of the rock
That brightens day by day,
And there outlives the tempest's shock
To mourn the castaway.

Ah, if where then the blue sea grieves
I lie beneath the rose,
My love will live in its lone leaves
After a thousand snows ;
And every crag that sees it blush
Will with my love-note ring,
While every bird within the bush
Pours this immortal spring ;
And each brown league of this salt spray
Shall lift my shrill sea-cry,
Where here above love's castaway
The ocean billows lie.

Divine Awe

To tremble, when I touch her hands,
With awe that no man understands ;
To feel soft reverence arise
When, lover-sweet, I meet her eyes ;
To see her beauty grow and shine
When most I feel this awe divine, —
Whate'er befall me, this is mine ;
And where about the room she moves,
My spirit follows her, and loves.

Wind and Wave

WHY wilt thou make, O Wave,
Forever in from the bay?
Dost thou seek on the beaches' grave
To cast thy life away?

Why wilt thou blow, O Wind,
Forever out to sea?
Is it death thou, too, wouldst find,
O winged eternity?

I told my love unsped
To both in the eventide ;
The wild Wind moaned, and fled ;
The wild Wave sobbed, and died.

Farewell

O SNOW-WHITE birds aye calling me,
And must I say farewell ;
And past the coasts of mystery
Follow the dark sea-swell ?

This shore was all the world to me ;
And if I say farewell,
Its vague and murmuring minstrelsy
Shall house in my Sea-shell.

And thou, Sea-rose, forget not me,
Though now I say farewell ;
And where I lie, afar from thee,
To those who love me tell.

But, O Wild Eden, not to thee,
O, not to thee farewell ;
Nor can the heart of Italy
Vie with thy maiden-spell !

The Wanderers

THE ocean, storming on the rocks,
Shepherds not there his wild, wet flocks ;
The soaring ether nowhere finds
An eyrie for the wingèd winds ;
Nor has yon glittering sky a charm
To hive in heaven the starry swarm ;
And so thy wandering thoughts, my heart,
No home shall find ; let them depart !

“Now Marble Apennines Shining”

Now marble Apennines shining
Should breathe my spirit bare ;
My heart should cease repining
In the rainbow-haunted air ;
But cureless sorrow carries
My heart beyond the sea,
Nor comfort in it tarries
Save thoughts of thee.

The branch of olive shaken
Silters the azure sea ;
Winds in the ilex waken ;
O, wert thou here with me,
Gray olive, dark ilex, bright ocean,
The radiant mountains round,
Never for love's devotion
Were sweeter lodging found !

“I see the Warm Sun Parting”

I SEE the warm sun parting
From all sweet things that be ;
The orange now regrets him,
With the rose in company ;
And faintly flushing darkens
The blossomed almond tree ;
In every kiss he taketh
I seem to part from thee.

Dark lifts the palm tree yonder
Its sharp spines on the west.
O doth the birch now waken
And whisper of thy guest ?
O white birch, when stars cover
The bird within thy nest,
Dost thou sigh near her bosom
The longing of my breast ?

Love Delayed

THE star that most is mine once did I see ;
No cloud there was ; only the reddened air
Bloomed round it where it smiled, all bright and fair ;
Then most of all love seemed divine to me.
So pure it shone I could but think of thee ;
So rosily enclasped, yet more must dare ;
“So dost thou shine, my love,” nor could forbear,
“So soft my passion folds thy purity !”
But now I see the western star all gold
Hang o'er the high and gloomy Apennine ;
And there I read my lot more truly told —
The night, the penance, the far journey mine !
Still be thou bright ! — My heart, all dark and cold,
Suffers no light save what from thee doth shine.

Love's Confessional

ONLY the lily shall shrive me
Of my passion and my pain ;
Only the rose shall revive me
From death unto life again.
O lily, white to see,
O rose of mystery,
Hear me confess !

I was a lover from birth, —
Flower of the earth !
Love's thoughts were mine from a boy, —
Flower of love's joy !
Love's words were mine through youth, —
Flower of love's truth !
Love's deeds were mine, man-grown, —
Flower of love's throne !
Thoughts, words, deeds, were his, —
Flower of one bliss !

I was a lover from birth, —
Flower of the earth !

My thoughts were love's from a boy, —

Desire, not joy !

My words were love's through youth, —

Prayer, not truth !

My deeds were love's, man-grown, —

Defeat, not his throne !

Thoughts, words, deeds, were his, —

Pain, not bliss !

From my thoughts in which love sighs,

From my words in which love cries,

From my deeds in which love dies,

White lily, shrive me !

With love's thoughts wherefrom joy springs,

With love's words wherein truth sings,

With love's deeds wherewith heaven rings,

My rose, revive me !

Going North

ICE-GORGE and mountain snow,
And ere my steps depart,
The avalanche will leap and go
Into the glacier's heart.

Ice-cave and rainbow-quiver,
And blue from the glacier's mouth
The rushing river, with chill and shiver,
Glides into the warmèd South.

The sun-tide sets to furthest North,
And ere my steps arrive,
The fields aflood, and the willow forth,
And the thawed bees leave the hive.

Spring, with the almond-blossom wing
Brushing the Alpine snows,
Wing and wing, fly with me, Spring,
Till the Arctic be all one rose ;

And all that is cold and frozen be gone,
And the icebergs melt in the sea ;
Till the blushing maid be kissed and won,
And her cold heart melt in me !

Homeward Bound

INTO the west of the waters on the living ocean's foam,
Into the west of the sunset where the young adventurers
 roam,
Into the west of the shining star, I am sailing, sailing
 home ;
Home from the lonely cities, time's wreck, and the naked
 woe,
Home through the clean great waters where freemen's
 pennants blow,
Home to the land men dream of, where all the nations
 go ;
'Tis home but to be on the waters, 'tis home already
 here,
Through the weird red-billowing sunset into the west to
 steer,
To fall to sleep in the rocking dark with home a day more
 near.

By morning light the ship holds on, alive with happy
freight,
A thousand hearts with one still joy, and with one hope
elate,
To reach the land that mothered them and sweetly guides
their fate ;
Whether the purple furrow heaps the bows with dazzling
spray,
Or buried in green-based masses they dip the storm-swept
day,
Or the white fog ribbons o'er them, the strong ship holds
her way ;
And when another day is done, by the star of love we
steer
To the land of all that we love best and all that we hold
dear ;
We are sailing westward, homeward ; our western home
is near.

The Homestead

IN the high field I used to know
Where earliest the violets grow,
I found three, faithful to the rock,
The firstlings of the azure flock.

The sun-warmed ground, the soft salt air,
Seemed still of boyhood lingering there;
The sea-blown homestead of my race, —
What feelings filled the sacred place !

I found in tears 'tis memory gives
The immortal part by which man lives ;
And every flower I ponder on
Grows in a world of beauty gone.

Full many a spring of buried bloom
From these faint violets sheds perfume ;
And all the summers of the sun
My love remembers, shine as one.

Ye hills, ye woods my boyhood knew,
Be now my manhood dear to you !
And fairer may I ye behold
Year after year, as I grow old.

The Lindens

Bees in the lindens booming
In the green core, out of sight,
In the lindens, yellow-blooming,
Embosomed close as night ;
And nought is there to see
Save the mellow emerald's bright
Deep-foliaged lucidity
Of music, bloom, and light.

Bees in the lindens humming
Melody three days old,
"Midsummer coming, coming,
Autumn, and winter, the cold !"
The green core ringing is,
Rings the tiny blossomed gold,
The lindens ring with bliss
In three days told.

The Bat

ONE rich hollyhock warden,
High in the midsummer garden,
Motionless points its blossoming spear
Up to the honey-pale, amber-clear
Dome of the golden atmosphere,
Shut aloft by the foliage-wall,
Linden, rock-maple, elms over all,
Embowering, umbrageous, massive, tall,
That make of the garden a little dell,
A place of slumber for blade and bell, —
Of sleep and circumambient peace,
From the crimson hollyhock's flowered spire
To the one deep rose-plume drifting fire,
Where, duskily seen as the shades increase,
'Mid molten flakes of breaking fleece,
And trellised with many a fading spark,
Through her summer-lattice peers the dark.

Midsummer now, and the black bat come
Who makes of the garden his dim night-home ;

Familiar to me from Beowulf's year
That gave me named first-love, first-fear;
And before the wings of darkness seize
The blackening depths, he is firing there,
Lightly silhouetting the air.
In the hollow gulf of the trees:
Swooping, careening, never alight,
Swerving, turning, in evasive flight,
High and far on the elm's black edge,
Low in the clefs of the evergreen hedge;
Never long come, never quite gone,
With poise and waver he circles on,
Darts and doubles and disappears,
And blurs on the eaves with gyres and veers;
And ever I watch with charmed eyes
The noiseless shadow where it flies,
The strange lone guest of the branched gloom,
Weaving over the garden in bloom
In the silence and darkness of the night
His great gray loops of flight.

O'er summers many the flower-mould lies,
Since first, with night-awakened eyes,
I hunt the dark where the shadow flies;

Midsummers many the woven charm,
Weirdly weaving, wrought in me
Phantoms of fore-felt misery ;
Now many a year and many a grief
Lie buried under the yellow leaf ;
And the garden now were scarce the same
Unless the friendless creature came,
My shadow-playmate of long past time,
Where lonesome thought and darksome hour
Hung over the midsummer in flower,
Ere the sun-tide ebbed from the northern clime,
And the chill of the year made into the bower.
Dark comrade of the vanished prime,
Dark omen of misfortune near,
The past, the future, dark appear
Beneath his ever-falling rings.
But O, may never come hurt nor harm
To the least little tender film of his hunch-back
wings !

Something to me the black bat brings
I should miss were he never to come again,
The prisoner of this nighted frame ;
Nor how were life without death dear,
Earth without sorrow, love without pain,

And scarce this human heart the same
Unvisited by fear.

Midnight now, and my song-in-bloom,
Like the night-hid hollyhock, lifts its spear
From the master-soul, past beauty, past gloom,
To the midsummer midnight majestic, clear, —
And the far roll of the sea I hear ;
And the black bat flits a mote obscure
In the song where star and sea endure.

O black bat, what were thy omen true?—
My day hath the garden, my night hath you.

The humming-bird

BIRD in the flower,
Blossom-spirit,
Whose tiny power
Doth the rainbow inherit,
A breathless minute
Flower-like in it
Hang in the flower.

Ruby-throat rover
Of noon's blue hour,
Making music so sphere-like
Only silence can hear it,
Sung to the flower ;
Faëry resonance clear, like
The garden's bell-tower
Heard through the bower.

Larkspur-lover,
Deep in the flower,

WILD EDEN

With secret blisses,
Aërial kisses,
Over and over ;
Swift goer, swift comer,
Heart of the summer
A-wing on the flower.

Could heart discover
Thy love-fast power,
So near to hover,
So close to love her,
Deep in the flower,
With hid blisses
And silent kisses,
O, it were heaven
To be such a lover !

How should she fear it,
The rainbow spirit,
Nor love to be near it,
Flower-like immure it,
Love in life's flower ;
Feed it and lure it,

THE HUMMING-BIRD

III

The ruby rover,
One golden hour,
And over and over,
Home to her bower !

Love, the song-spirit,
Alone to hear it
There in her bower ;
Bright-bodied above her,
Hark, the true lover !
What passion he sings,
The sphere's own music
From the heartstrings ! —
Art thou gone, swift wings,
The bird from the flower ?

The Child

It was only the clinging touch
Of a child's hand in the street,
But it made the whole day sweet ;
Caught, as he ran full-speed,
In my own stretched out to his need,
Caught, and saved from the fall,
As I held, for the moment's poise,
In my circling arms the whole boy's
Delicate slightness, warmèd mould ;
Mine, for an instant mine,
The sweetest thing the heart can divine,
More precious than fame or gold,
The crown of many joys,
Lay in my breast, all mine.

I was nothing to him ;
He neither looked up nor spoke ;
I never saw his eyes ;
He was gone ere my mind awoke

From the action's quick surprise
With vision blurred and dim.

You say I ask too much :
It was only the clinging touch
Of a child in a city street ;
It hath made the whole day sweet.

Love's Birthright

To take the life, and stay the stream thereof;
To be the flower but not the seed of love ;
The voice, but not the heaven-homing song ;
The instrument, but not what doth belong
Unto the instrument as song to breath,
Its utterance of the chords of life and death,
The music born of it, its own soul-birth, —
This is to make thy body bankrupt earth,
And in thy soul annul the law divine,
For in the blood-tie love doth holiest shine ;
And life from life, to give and to receive,
For mortals is love's true prerogative ;
His sacred power lies there ; thence flows his grace
Diffused and deathless in a dying race,
And ever building, out of touch and sight,
The immortal world, with all we worship bright ;
O, ponder this, before death to thee come,
And childless eld, — no hand to lead thee home.

“From the Young Orchards”

FROM the young orchards, thick with rosy spray,
Falls in the windless night the wreath of May ;
And the young maples, fresh with early gold,
In one slow moon their emerald globes unfold ;
So grows, through happy change, the tree of life.

The arbutus unto the violet yields ;
Soon the wild daisies flood the fluttering fields ;
And last the cardinal and the golden-rod
Lift to the blue the soft fire of the sod ;
So moves, from bloom to bloom, the flower of love.

O, hidden-strange as on dew-heavy lawns
The warm dark scents of summer-fragrant dawns ;
O, tender as the faint sea-changes are,
When grows the flush and pales the snow-white star ;
So strange, so tender, to a maid is love.

O, calling as the touch of children's hands,
That draw all wanderers home o'er seas and lands ;

O, answering far as from the world divine,
Whence unseen hands through Time and Space touch
mine ;
So in my breast I hear the voice of love.

The Eden-heart of this majestic frame,
God's will on earth, and flame within the flame
Far as yon suns in Nature's mystic dusks,
Deep as the life whereof our lives are husks —
Unspeakable, O love, my love, is love.

"O, Struck beneath the Laurel"

O, STRUCK beneath the laurel, where the singing fountains
are,
I saw from heaven falling the star of love afar ;
O, slain in Eden's bower nigh the bourn where lovers
rest,
I fell upon the arrow that was buried in my breast ;
Farewell the noble labor, farewell the silent pain,
Farewell the perfect honor of the long years lived in vain ;
I lie upon the moorland where the wood and pasture
meet,
And the cords that no man breaketh are bound about my
feet.

The Dream

Was it April I heard sighing,
Was it May I heard replying,
In the time when love lay dying,
True love, so slow to die?

Was it April I saw mingling
With the sea-fog, white and chill,
Leave the ruddy maples tingling,
And the green mist on the hill ;
Come fire-shod through the furrow,
And fleeting through the boughs,
While many a golden morrow
Streamed backward from her brows?
Did I hear her breathing nigh
Where the wet, bright grasses grow
And the oriole passes by,
In moist places, warm and low,
Till I dreamed the dream before me
In the dreaming of the year,

And I dreamed her breath stole o'er me,
Sighing low, "Would May were here!"

Swelled the bud and closed the furrow ;
Shadier night and ampler day ;
April, sorrow unto sorrow,
Gave me unto mourning May ;
Like a spirit, bending o'er me,
Woman seemed she, eve and morn,
Light in darkness, May that bore me
Watched the child that she had borne ;
Soothed me with dim hands of healing,
Sleeping, till I dreamed again
Balmier daybreaks rosier stealing
On the heaving ocean-plain,
Past the tide-ways of the islands
To the dreamy-cadenced foam,
And the large out-looking highlands,
Pines and pastures of my home ;
There beside me, parting never,
Over earth and sea and skies
Lights of beauty blown forever
Flamed and faded with my eyes ;
Faint the music o'er my bosom —

“Sleep and dream, sleep and dream ;
Waken, bud, and waken, blossom ;
Feed him, lead him, flower and gleam ! ”
And at last, like music broken
With a great cry, came the light,
Loosed in tears my woe unspoken,
Lived, and brought the starless night.

The Death-rose

My pulses tremble and start,
And flame in my throbbing heart ;
And I would that the ocean-wind might arise
And blow the flying scud through the skies ;
And I long for the spirit of cold
About my fever to flash and fold, —
And far away I see uplift,
Through the waver of thought and memory's drift,
Nevada peaks, where the heavenly rose
Sleeps in the bosom of summer snows :
Summer snows in their bosom lie,
And out of the heart of the tender sky,
Where all day long the lone sun rolled,
Blooms the death-rose in a mist of gold ;
And with sudden pallor the faint flush goes,
And leaves the peaks to their white repose.

The Mighty Mother

O MOTHER, Mighty Mother, thou who bearest
The children of illusion and desire,
Lovers of all that to the heart is fairest,
Know'st thou not me, who now thine aid require
And over all thy brood did most aspire
To love and to be loved? whom late thou gavest
To moulding time beside the sounding deep,
Bosomed with that wild passion which thou cravest
And peril in my blood to dance and leap
And in my heart perpetual spring to keep ;
But O, what kindless storm and winter woe
Have laid the violets of the year asleep,
And bade my bursting blossoms never blow !
Am I not thine, O Mother? bend low, bend low

O Mighty Mother, who with dark hands dippest
Thy children in this living glory's tide,
And in their infant gaze creation clippest
Blue-orbed in their young spirits azure-eyed,
And openest for their feet far-off the wide

Light-gateways ! thou who hast the mighty magic
And layest thy sons in nature's foster-breast,
Where from the wells of being they drain the tragic
Nurture of spirits greatening o'er the rest,
And do themselves with that same power invest
With which the lone sun flames and blue seas roll,
Which stretches out the day from east to west,
And sows the vivid heavens from pole to pole, —
New wielders of the universal soul !

O Mother, who with hands of splendor blindest
The naked vision which thy sons adore,
And o'er them, face and hair and forehead, bindest
The mortal veil the sacred poets wore,
Bringing it forth from fame's eternal store ;
And windest round them with sweet-tonèd measures
Its wandering woof of winds and waters wove,
The poets' flowery joys and starry pleasures,
The marvel of the dreaming soul of love, —
And heaven and earth in its enchantment move ;
Then see they spirits walking in the sky,
And mates of glory go the way they rove ;
Across the world they see a great beam lie ;
Nor deem it life to live, nor death to die.

If this were life, thou wouldst not hear me crying ;
If this were death, my mouth were stopt with dust ;
O Mighty Mother, far beyond replying,
Gone is the power that made me great in trust ;
I only cry aloud because I must,
For whom in heaven sang every star my brother,
Sang every flower on earth in tune with me,
And light and sound, each sweeter than the other,
About my thoughts washed music like a sea,
Where long I voyaged with my minstrelsy ;
They friend not now ; nor see I, night nor day,
The landscape glorified with cloud or tree ;
But waves of shadow through my senses play ;
Along dark tides my spirit swoons away.

O, leave me not to drift through this blue being
Borne darkly as the dark wave bears the foam,
Sinking away, past touch, past sound, past seeing,
And further from divinest love to roam !
Not thus thou bringest the fair life-lovers home !
But rather past celestial skies that brighten
To the far shining of the heavenly rose,
Past congregated stars that blaze and lighten
Unto the Sun unseen whence all light flows,

The soul enamoured to its mystery goes !
Me darkness compasses, and starless woe ;
Me living doth night's sepulchre enclose ;
O yet, even now, might I thy presence know,
Though all were lost, thy child might victor go !

Autumn

WHERE summer bees were droning
Half the moony night,
Like a poet's thoughts intoning
Bliss of as brief delight,
Now autumn dirges sift
The lindens yellowing old,
Wailing low the dying shrift
Of love long told.

Autumn winds go moaning
Through the boughs like amber bright ;
Grinds the gray sea groaning
On beaches wild and white ;
The lonely lindens lift
Their long-deserted gold ;
Soon the black rain, the white drift,
And the leaf in the mould.

So Slow to Die

THE rainbow on the ocean
A moment bright,
The nightingale's devotion
That dies on night,
Eve's rosy star a-tremble
Its hour of light, —
All things that love resemble
Too soon take flight.

The violets we cherish
Died in the spring ;
Roses and lilies perish
In what they bring ;
And joy and beauty wholly
With life depart ;
But love leaves slow, how slowly !
Life's empty heart.

O, strange to me, and wondrous,
The storm passed by,
With sound of voices thundrous
Swept from the sky ;
But stranger, love, thy fashion, —
O, tell me why
Art thou, dark storm of passion,
So slow to die?

As roll the billowy ridges
When the great gale has blown o'er ;
As the long winter-dirges
From frozen branches pour ;
As the whole sea's harsh December
Pounds on the pine-hung shore ;
So will love's deep remember,
So will deep love deplore.

The Dirge

I HAVE been where the white lilies blow
That no heart ponders ;
I have been where the rose-thickets grow,
And love never wanders ;
Where the laurel-branch unbroken
Forgets the songful strife ;
I have found this Death-in-life ;
'Tis in Wild Eden !

There over the low liliated lawns,
Down rose-leaf alleys,
She moves under silent dawns
Through songless valleys ;
Cold rose and snow-cold lilies
Shall for the maid be strewn,
Nor laurel for her moan ;
'Tis in Wild Eden !

I have sent my songs up to her —
Sweetly youth left me ;

I have given my manhood to woo her,
And of all bereft me ;
And nightly I wake from the garden
That lieth remote, apart,
On the bourn of the hopeless heart ; —
'Tis in Wild Eden.

The Blood-red Blossom

“WHENCE comest thou, Child, when April wakes,
So phantom-fair through these green brakes?
Why wilt thou follow, fond and fain,
My footsteps to the wood again?

“Why, as I rest by this gray rock,
Do thy wet eyes the violets mock?
O, tell me why, in thy white bosom,
Thou ever wearest the blood-red blossom?” —

“Thou comest to watch the violets die,
And over early love to sigh;
Thou comest to watch the wild-rose waken,
And drop thy tears o’er love forsaken.

“And wouldst thou know why these three years,
When April wakes, I rise in tears?
And wouldst thou know why in my bosom
I wear forever the blood-red blossom?

" 'Twas here I grew, warm nature's child,
Too young to be by love beguiled ;
I took the mantle of the spring
To be my infant covering.

" My heart was full of tender loves,
Soft as a dove-cote full of doves ;
I brought the violets kisses true,
Warm as the sun and fresh as dew ;

" Loved to-day and wished the morrow,
Went blue-eyed and knew no sorrow,
Dreaming what I saw, and seeing
What I dreamed, a gentle being ;

" Seeing, dreaming, loving all,
What should such a child befall,
Save the sunshine, save the breeze
Blowing to the shining seas ?

" O, fair I flowered in opening youth,
Too pure to doubt that love is truth ;
I took the fragrance of the May
To be the sweetness of my clay.

" Came the spirit of Desire ;
Came the finding of the lyre ;
Came the night without repose ;
Came the singing of the rose.

" I saw it open, fresh and fair,
And spread upon the country air ;
I saw the shy bud swell apart,
And at the last give all its heart.

" I felt a tremor seize my breast,
And hopes unknown and unconfest ;
I only knew some joy to be
By joy that then was dear to me.

" And down I knelt, and kissed it oft,
Kisses many, pure, and soft ;
I thought — I was so childish wise —
God planted it in Paradise.

" O, blithe beneath the branch of June
My heart danced with the stars in tune ;
And, throb on throb, deep nature's flood
Grew warm and gladdened in my blood.

"O, love began as Phosphor bright
Melts on the rosy breast of light ;
O, love began as this wild wood
Quires with its red-throat multitude !

"I gave my body to sweet Desire ;
I gave my soul to the shrill lyre ;
And all night long, without repose,
I sang the beauty of the rose.

"And I forgot the violets dead,
And many a lily's golden head ;
And I passed by all gentle flowers
Wherewith love decks his mortal bowers.

"My blood is faint, my cheeks are pale,
Since I began the deathless tale ;
And thee I follow, fond and fain,
When to the wood thou goest again.

"By this gray rock I stand, a child ;
My eyes are wet, my looks are wild ;
I see a deep wound in thy breast,
And tears bedew thy secret rest.

“The wood shall wilt, the grass shall wither,
But with the spring will I come hither ;
And when from all things here I fade,
With lovers dead shalt thou be laid.

“And now thou knowest why these three years,
When April wakes, I rise in tears ;
And now thou knowest why in my bosom
I wear forever the blood-red blossom.”

Seaward

I WILL go down in my youth to the hoar sea's infinite
foam ;
I will bathe in the winds of heaven ; I will nest where the
white birds home ;
Where the sheeted emerald glitters and drifts with bursts
of snow,
In the spume of stormy mornings, I will make me ready
and go ;
Where under the clear west weather the violet surge is
rolled,
I will strike with the sun in heaven the day-long league
of gold ;
Will mix with the waves, and mingle with the bloom of
the sunset bar,
And toss with the tangle of moonbeams, and call to the
morning star ;
And wave and wing shall know me a sea-child even as
they,
Of the race of the great seafarers a thousand years if
a day.

For far in the dawn of England, by the gray Devonian
shore
There dwelt a cluster of fishers who drew from the sea
their store ;
And aye as the morning mounted, they took the ocean's
breath,
They shook out sail, they slipped away, they gave great
odds to death ;
In little scores they spoiled the seas, wherever helm could
steer,
And grafting greatness through the world they planted
England here ;
Nor rested from sea-labor between the star-set poles, —
Two centuries their schooners plunged on the Gorges'
shoals ;
And when the new world's morning unveiled earth's
vaster face,
And God poured hence the flood-tides of his many-
fountained grace,
From Arctic to Antarctic, by either far-flung Cape,
Wherever points the compass, the great sea-roads they
shape ;
They cleave the Indian Ocean, they chart the China
Seas,

The coral-tusked Pacific they have vanquished at their
ease ;

They haunt the Coast of Gold, they hang on the Isles of
Spice,

They have summered the Tropic Trades, they have
wintered the Polar ice ;

And dropping home they anchored in the quiet harbor-
bars,

Who through the winds of all the world had flung our
shining stars.

Mine is this blood-red lineage, 'twixt the glories of birth
and death,

That gave for the breath of my nostrils the salt sea-
breath !

Flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone, soul of my soul,
To thee, man-nourishing Ocean, I come — make me
whole !

I am weary in blood and nerve, weary in brain and limb,
Weary in sense and feeling, and the lights of life burn
dim.

Ah, soon will the hill of the violets be mounded deep
with snows ;

A mist comes out of the lilies, and flame from the breath
of the rose ;

And all this marvellous beauty is a madness in my
brain ;

Forever my joyful being is dying — dying in pain ;
Of the flush of the bough, of the fragrance of woods,
of the moan of the dove
Weary — and weary of passion — and thrice, thrice weary
of love !

O, the bitter-sweet illusion of the seeming-happy hours,
The pure thoughts, the sweet awe, the darkness-budding
bowers !

O, beautiful in noble hearts love's dawn-sweet garden
stands,

But the breath of one brief whisper shall sow the place
with sands !

O, fair in love's great ages, down the thousand years of
rhyme

Rings the tourney, shines the laurel of the courtly
time !

But here is haunting of houses where they chatter of yea
and nay,

Chatter of title and fortune, chatter the heart away ;

The lairs of social lies, the golden barter base, —

Not to decline on these have I seen love face to face !

I will rise, I will go from the places that are dark with
passion and pain,

From the sorrow-changèd woodlands and a thousand
memories slain.

O light gone out in darkness on the cliff I seek no more
Where she I worshipped met me in her girlhood at the
door !

O, bright though years how many ! farewell, sweet guid-
ing star —

The wild wind blows me seaward over the harbor-bar !
Better thy waste, gray Ocean, the homeless, heaving plain,
Than to choke the fount of life and the flower of honor
stain !

I will seek thy blessed shelter, deep bosom of sun and
storm,

From the fever and fret of the earth and the things that
debase and deform ;

For I am thine ; from of old thou didst lay me, a child,
at rest

In thy cradle of many waters, and gav'st to my hunger
thy breast ;

Remember the dreamful boy whom thy beauty preserved
from wrong, —

Thou taughtest me music, O Singer of the never-silent song !

Man-grown, I will seek thy healing ; though from worse
than death I fly,

Not mine the heart of the craven, not here I mean to
die !

Let me taste on my lips thy salt, let me live with the sun
and the rain,

Let me lean to the rolling wave and feel me man again !

O, make thee a sheaf of arrows as when thy winters rage
forth, —

Whiten me as thy deep-sea waves with the blanching
breath of the North !

O, take thee a bundle of spears from thine azure of burn-
ing drouth,

Smite into my pulses the tremors, the fervors, the blaze
of the South !

So might my breath be snow-cold, and my blood be pure
like fire,

The heavenly souls that have left me will come back to
sustain and inspire.

Take me — I come — O, save me in the paths my fathers
trod ! —

Then fling me back to the battle where men labor the
peace of God !

THE PLAYERS' ELEGY AND
OTHER POEMS

The Players' Elegy on the Death of Edwin Booth

**READ AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE IN THE MADISON
SQUARE CONCERT HALL, NOVEMBER 13, 1893**

LINGER ye here, all lovers of the soul,
Nor, careful of our grief, too far remove
From the last rites of love !
Bend hither your sad hearts, no more to flow
With deaths of ill-starred kings and tears of time,
Plucked from your bosoms by a feignèd woe,
But from the living fountain learn to shed
Some drops of sorrow for the player dead,
While round his earth dirges of slumber go !
Who mourn him, if not ye he taught to weep ?
Yours are the hearts he sought, the hearts he won.
This solemn hour with sad observance keep,
O living throng, felt round his mortal sleep
With man's long tribute unto greatness gone !
Ah, not as o'er the violet in his prime,
For him sweet pastoral notes and musèd rhyme

The shroud of beauty weave, and leave him so;
But honor's breath and virtue's pure acclaim,
Meeds of long life, guerdons of happy fame,
To future ages shall his blazon show.
In lowly dust abides his buried head,
But in the thoughts of men he aye shall climb,
Who greatly gave his life to noble ends,
And in himself his country's honor stored,
And, past our borders, was our fame abroad.
Not unlamented he to night descends
Who with the people's life his genius blends;
Innumerable sorrow and unseen farewell,
And what the heart but to itself doth tell,
Shall be his passing-bell.

The wide stage darkens with such rare eclipse
As brings the hush upon all breathing lips;
Yet is this silence one that doth belong
To music, and this shadow unto song;
Nor shall the Muse's ample store afford
Less than her flourished laurel for his shroud,
Who followed, for his master and his lord,
Her son, on whom applauding ages crowd —
Him who, erewhile — him, too — with sorrow loud
And Thames's song, was to his silence borne

In Stratford ; yet again she bids men mourn
Her tragic grave, and by the Atlantic sea
Hath set her stone of perfect memory.
Nor thou the last — great Mother of our verse
And Avon's source, that loudest thy fame doth sound,
Who laid thy emblems on his sable hearse —
Honor the fellow of thy master-mind,
Who, far as round the illumined world doth reach
The large dominion of thy conquering speech,
Bore England's greatest message to mankind !
To him once more let all men's voices roll,
Though the loud plaudit fallen to low lament :
The breath of praise to him be, mourning, sent
From city and continent
And every soil his voice made Shakspeare's ground !
Yet greatest love for him shall here be found.

For first of men born ours he did advance
In the world's front our title to the crown,
And with old glory blend our young renown,
In tragedy a victor ; and his glance
Knew none but equals on that ancient ground,
While rolled his triumph to the Danube's bound.
What could he less, inheriting his race,
Ancestral honor, and the happy breed

That from old Burbage heired the players' art,
And in young Garrick treasured up the seed,
In Kemble majesty, in Kean made grace.
The masters come not oft,
Who lighten in the soul, and ride aloft
On old Imagination's wingèd sphere ;
But he was native there,
And could that orb of pale dominion steer,
Who bore the soul of Shakspeare in his heart
And bodied forth his world. O potent art,
Clothing with mortal mould the poet's thought,
That so could recreate
The beauty of dead princes and their state,
And all that glory to perdition brought,
Sorrows of song ! O noble breast o'erfraught,
That such a weight of perilous stuff could carry,
And to the old words marry
The music of his tongue, his princely mien,
And beauty like the Muses' Mercury,
That like an antique god he trod the scene,
And every motion carved him where he stood
Fit for eternity !

Nor came he to this height by happy chance ;
Nor birth nor fortune to that presence thrust ;

But wisest labor and strict governance.
Lower than in himself he dared not trust,
But his dear study of perfection made,
Increasing nature's gifts with learning's aid.
The scholar's page oft lit his lonely hour,
Yet spared all knowledge alien to his power ;
The true tradition, wandered from its source,
Taught by his memory, found its ancient course :
Informed with mind, now Shylock shook the stage,
And subtly tempered burst Lear's awful rage.
And more he brought than yet had ever been
To plant illusion in the painted scene,
And bade the arts a royal tribute pour
To make the pageant wealthier than before ;
As in a living Rome ran Cæsar's blood,
And round the lovers fair Verona stood ;
Yet well he knew the action to maintain
Against the scene, that else were laid in vain ;
Happy who first had learned, though hid from youth,
What Prosper taught him from the buried book
Whereon the brooding eyes of genius look —
The way unto the heart is simple truth.
Thus did he mount the dais of the throne,
Thus did he leap into the royal siege,

And filled the stage, and in himself summed all.
Hark in our ears the poor Fool's lip-crushed moan !
Weep, Bolingbroke ! he weeps, thy crownless liege !
Mount, Richard, mount ! thy bloody murders call !
Alas, our eyes have seen,
As if no other woe than this had been,
The heart-break of the Moor, and, dark behind,
Traced frank Iago's intellectual stealth
And panther footfall in the generous mind.
How oft with hearts elate
We watched the Cardinal play the match with fate,
While, trembling, shook the state
More than his age — whose mind, a kingdom's wealth
Made everything but innocence his tool,
Daunted the throne and headlong threw the fool !
With Cassius did we plot, with Brutus walk.
O, why remember, now that all is fled,
How deep as life the fond illusion spread
Round him, who now is dead,
Till we with Hamlet seemed to live and talk !
O tender soul of human melancholy
That o'er him brooded like the firmament !
Thence had his eyes their supernatural fires
And his deep soul its element of night ;

Thence had he felt the touch of great thoughts wholly
That with mortality but ill consent,
The star-crost spirit's unconfined desires,
That in this brief breath plumes its fiery flight ;
And on his brows hung ever the pale might
Of intellectual passion, inward bent,
Musing the bounds of Nature's continent ;
There love, that flies abreast with thoughts of youth,
And glides, a splendor, by the wings of truth,*
Over the luminous vague to darkness went ;
Like some slow-dying star down heaven's pole,
It moves o'er earth's blind frame and man's dark soul,
And passes out of sight,
And the lone soul once more confines its light.
So worked the poet's passion in his heart,
And, from within, his blood dark influence lent,
While with the body, there, the spirit blent,
And stamped the player of creative art —
The soul incarnate in its mortal bloom,
The infinite, shut in how little room —
The word, the act — no more ; yet thereof made
The player who the heart of Hamlet played !
Ah, who shall e'er forget the sweet, grave face,
The beauty flowering from a stately race,

The mind of majesty, the heart of grace?
How like himself did all things there appear,
And hued like him ! over whose own dear head
Stood the dark planet, and its burden shed —
A world disordered, a distempered sphere,
Crookèd events, and roughness everywhere, —
The jar of Nature's frame since, earthward wheeled.
First with nativity the stars grew sad,
And prescience of what should be sorrow, had.
These were his world — who had a world within
Of augury that bankrupts Nature's bond,
A power, past her will, not from her source,
Felt in the mind that lightens round its throne,
Majestic flames, inheriting her gloom,
Pale splendors, yet with power to illume
Time's buried tract and reaches of the tomb ;
There reigns the spirit, there is truly known,
In whose unclouded world doth Nature roll,
Herself an image ; there, by shadows shown,
He held the mirror up within the soul,
And from his bosom read the part alone,
The infinite of man within him sealed,
And played himself — O, with what truth exprest !
He plucked the mystery from the master's breast,

But ah, what mortal plucks it from his own?

Such was our Hamlet, whom the people knew,
A soul of noble breath, sweet, kind, and true ;
Our flesh and blood, yet of the world ideal,
So native to immortal memory
That to the world he hardly seems to die
More than the poet's page, where buried lie
The form and feature of eternity ;
But when we look within, what spirits there
Move in the silence of that hallowed air !
He in the mind shall his black mantle wear,
Pore on the book, and greet the players dear,
And make dead Yorick with his memory fair.
But ah, for us — alas ! who knew him near,
Nearer the loss ; ah, what shall yet appear
Of all he was ? — For us the vacant chair,
For us the vanished presence from the room,
The silent bust, the portrait hung with gloom ;
He will not come, not come !
Yet doth his figure linger on the sense,
And memory her sacred relics save
Of voice, and hand, and silent influence,
That some shall carry with them to the grave.
No more beside the lighted hearth he stands,

Bringing us welcome from o'erflowing hands —
Our host, our benefactor, and our friend,
Faultless in all, who all in one could blend :
Gracious, with something of old reverence ;
Generous, who never knew the gift he gave ;
Thoughtful, who for the least himself would waive !
How oft we saw him in the evening light,
The patient sufferer in our daily sight !
Here was his home ; here were his gathered friends ;
Blest is the life that in such friendship ends !
Nor further looks the verse, though taught to see
More nigh that heart of noble privacy,
Bosom of perfect trust, from guile how free,
An open soul, with reticence refined ;
Yet when he spoke a child might read his mind :
So great a soul had such simplicity.

Cease, flood of song, thy stream ! now cease, and kne
Thy silver fountains from all hearts do flow !
Cease now, my song, and learn to say good-night
To him whose glory lends thy stream its light !
The last great heir of the majestic stage
Has passed, and with him passes a great age ;
Low with the elders lies his honored head,
And in one voice are many voices dead.

O old tradition, crusted with great names,
Our captain-jewels ! lo, among them set,
Booth's, like a star ! look you, how sweet it flames,
And with the lustre of our tears still wet !
Farewell — farewell ! move, sweet soul, to thy rest :
Sleep cloud thy eyes, deep sleep be in thy breast !
Go, noble heart, unto our sons a name,
Through all men's praises to eternal fame !
Move, happy spirit, where all voices cease —
Through our love go, to where love's name is peace !

ODE

READ AT THE EMERSON CENTENARY SERVICES, BOSTON,
MAY 24, 1903

I

Nor on slight errands come the Immortals ;
Loud the alarum ; they burst the portals,
Bringing new ages,
Saints, poets, sages ;
They rend, they trample ;
Their power is ample
To do great deeds and tasks unshared,
That only the single soul has ever dared.
In them, and what they can,
Is the greatness of man.

II

O City, set amid the bloom and brine
Of bowery summer by her Northern seas,
Sweet is thy azure morn, thy blowing breeze ;
But deeper our lives with thee entwine ;

And as young children at their mother's knees
Gaze on her face, such loveliness is thine,
For half their eyes behold, and half their hearts divine,
And their dropt lids adore the unseen throne ;
So has our boyhood known,
The heavenly glory felt in greatness gone
That in its native fields long lingers on :
Blest feet that walked thy ancient ways,
And edged with light thy morning days ;
Forms that along thy ice-bound shore
The sword and lamp in each hand bore ;
Who built one age, and hewed the next,
While Freedom hoards each gospel text ;
Through lowly lives the frugal centuries roll,
And each rude cradle holds a child of God ;
Long generations nurse the new-born soul,
And show the shining track the Saviour trod ;
And fairly from that first and famous race
Who smote the rock whence poured this stream of years,
Came forth the bloom of prayer and flower of grace
Whose incense sweeter in the sons appears.

O Mother-state, white with departing May,
A hundred Mays depart ; this beauty aye

Streams from thy breasts, a thousand children own
Whose lives are made the scriptures of thy youth,
And him the first, whose early voice intoning
With pointing finger read God's primal truth.
From sire to son was stored the sacred seed ;
Age piled on age to meet a nation's need ;
Till the high natal hour,
Rounding to perfect power,
Upon the verge of confluent ages borne,
Found genius' height sublime,
And set a star upon the front of time,
That spreads, as far as sunset flames, thy sj
morn.

III

O boon, all other gifts above
That loads our veins with power, with love,
Joyful is birth wherever mothers are,
Since over Bethlehem stood the children's star !
Ever by 'that transcendent sign
The budding boy is born divine ;
Infinity into his being flows
As if all nature flowered in one rose ;

A million blooms suffuse the fragrant hills,
A manhood race, a manhood race, our emerald valleys
fills !

I see great cities stand,
Mothers of equal men,
Each leading by the hand
A multitude immense, sweet to command,
Her clinging broods ; the tool, the book, the pen,
Letters and arts whereby a man may live,
To each child she doth give,
And with fraternity she makes all fast,
Honoring the spark of God ; she cherisheth
Its mighty flame to be her blood and breath,
And her immortal pinion over death ;
For as these little ones shall fare, she knows, her fates are
cast.

A manhood race ! we are not children now,
Fronting the fates with knit imperial brow,
Lords over Nature ; fast her mystic reign
Fades in the finer mystery of the brain,
That now with intellect and will informs
Her clashing atoms and her wandering storms ;

Deep in the sphere the mighty magic plies ;
Darkness has fled from matter ; from the skies
Space has departed ; the invisible
Pestilence shivers in life's ultimate cell ;
While continents divide like Egypt's sea,
And dim Pacific floors wonder what thought may be.
And better in the human strife
We serve the soul, the lords of life,
Blending the many-nationed race
Where God along all bloods has poured the torrent of
 His grace.
Bright in our midst His Mercy-seat
Throngs with innumerable feet ;
Nor hath He made their multitude complete ;
But where the human storm terrific rears
Above the flying land,
One word the throne of heaven hears
That all tongues understand :
America, they whisper low
As down through fire and blood they go,
Through awful crime and desperate woe,
To the pale ocean strand ;
Nor once, nor twice, this rising coast appears
Beneath its heaven-streaming torch illumed,

Man's ark of safety on the flood of years ;
There have we clothed them naked, and there fed
On Freedom's loaf, whose blessèd bread,
Forever multiplied and unconsumed,
As if the Master's voice still in it spoke
Our hands have to uncouth millions broke ;
There have we wiped away the whole world's tears.
Wide as the gates of life, let stand our gates,
Nor them deny whom God denied not birth ;
Nor, though we house all outcasts of the earth,
Christ being within our city, fear the fates !

O birthright found the sweetest
That in our blood began !
O manhood-faith found fleetest
Of all the faiths of man !
We own the one great Mother
Who first the man-child bore,
And every man a brother
Who wears the form Christ wore.
Such mighty voices murmured round our youth,
Souls dedicated to immortal toil,
While, battle-bound, the fiery wings of truth
Sublime swept past us o'er the perilled soil ;

For we were born the children of the great,
Seers of the soul and savers of the state ;
We saw and heard and touched them, hand and
Whose voices now like dying cannon speak ;
So loud a morn was to our childhood given,
And mixed with flashes out of heaven
Pealing words our spirits shook,
And awful shapes with superhuman look, —
Our cradle-truths ; so native to our lips,
That like our mother tongue their thunder slips
We have no memory when it was not so.
Wherefore we fear not, coming to our own ;
The eyrie's brood
Find eagle's food ;
The blue dominion
Tires not their pinion ;
Men are we, greatness that our sons shall know
Who us inherit ; now we wield alone
The glory ; for the mighty ones lie low ;
They are dead, brain and hand ; they are dust
and bone.

IV

I lay the singing laurels down
Upon the silent grave ;
'Tis vain ; the master slumbers on
Nor knows the gift he gave.
I take again the murmuring crown
Unto the here and now ;
And every leaf sings Emerson,
Whose music binds my brow.
For in this changeful mortal scene,
Where all things mourn what once has been,
Only the touch of soul with soul
At last escapes from death's control :
And from himself I learnt it, — the true singer
Must of his own heavens be the bright star-bringer,
And sphere of dawning lights his morning song ;
So shall his music to God's time belong,
Not to an age ; thus did his earth absorb
The eternal ray, and new enorb
The star of time ; he heard the wind-harp's strings,
The cosmic pulse, the chemic dance,

And saw through spirit-mating things
Man's secular advance ;
One song the sons of morning sang ;
One blushed from Nature's lyre ;
One the Judæan carols rang ;
One flamed the heart's desire ;
Thence he snatched with burning palms,
Hymns and proud millennial psalms ;
And, high o'er all, one strain no heaven could c
With notes sublimely dominant,
Sang victory, victory, victory unto man
In whose fair soul victorious good began ;
The vision beautiful,
The labor dutiful,
Truth, the finder,
Love, the binder ;
And close about our mortal tasks their sacred fi
Sweet faces pale beside our paler flame.
He fed our souls with holy dew,
Yet taught us by the line to hew,
And mix of heaven and earth a new ideal,
Till harmonies of soul and sense
Shall everywhere rhyme innocence ;
And in himself forecast the man he drew ;

Him whom farthest years reveal
In millions multiplied,
Swarming green savannahs o'er,
Purple height and emerald floor,
The snow-clad and the golden shore,
And where the coral combers roar,
In beauty dwelling side by side ;
A type to show what constitutes a man
Amid his daily tasks ;
Even such a type as the pure gospel asks,
The bravest lover of his kind, the man American.

V

And Thou, O Fountain, whence we issued forth,
Source of all kindly grace and noble worth,
Who in our fathers poured so wide a flood,
Leave not our temples, fail not from our blood ;
Even this that doth along my pulses fleet,
With all the American years made sweet,
The sweetest blood that flows !
On Thee our lives repose.
Make us to dwell secure where tempests are,
And find in peace the mightiest arm of war ;

And if, past justice' bound, our foes increase,
Make war the harbinger of larger peace ;
So in our Capitol shall law be found
With palm and olive, equal trophies, crowned.
Last for the soul make we our great appeal :
There foster and confirm the life ideal ;
Grant us self-conquest and self-sacrifice,
Since only upon these may mankind rise.

Aubrey de Vere

OBITUARY 1902

TRUE to the Muses and to mankind true,
 Bard of thy race, amid the foolish sage,
 Take now thy crown among our sacred few,
 Who wast Christ's laureate in a faithless age.

Wendell Phillips

I SAW him stand, upon the Judgment Day,
 Who in his life all human wrath had braved,
 The appealing angel in his voice, and say :
 " If but one soul be lost, how is man saved ? "

Essex Regiment March

WRITTEN FOR THE EIGHTH MASSACHUSETTS UNITED STATES
VOLUNTEER INFANTRY IN THE SPANISH WAR

ONCE more the Flower of Essex is marching to the wars ;
We are up to serve the Country wherever fly her Stars ;
Ashore, afloat, or far or near, to her who bore us true,
We will do a freeman's duty as we were born to do.

Lead the van, and may we lead it,
God of armies, till the wrong shall cease ;
Speed the war, and may we speed it
To the sweet home-coming, God of peace !

Our fathers fought their battles, and conquered for the
right,
Three hundred years victorious from every stubborn fight ;
And still the Flower of Essex from the ancient stock puts
forth,
Where the bracing blue sea-weather strings the sinews of
the North.

The foe on field, the foe on deck to us is all the same ;
With both the Flower of Essex has played a winning
game ;
We threw them on the village green, we cowed them in
Algiers,
And ship to ship we shocked them in our first great naval
years.

We rowed the Great Commander o'er the ice-bound
Delaware,
When the Christmas snow was falling in the dark and
wintry air ;
And still the Flower of Essex, like the heroes gone be-
fore,
Where the tide of danger surges shall take the laboring
oar.

The Flower that first lay bleeding along by Bloody Brook
Full oft hath Death upgathered in war's red reaping-hook ;
Its home is on our headlands ; 'tis sweeter than the rose ;
But sweetest in the battle's breath the Flower of Essex
blows.

At the best a dear home-coming, at the worst a soldier's
grave,

Beating the tropic jungle, ploughing the dark blue wave
But while the Flower of Essex from the granite rock shall
come,

None but the dead shall cease to fight till all go marching
home.

March onward to the leaguer wherever it may lie ;
The Colors make the Country whatever be the sky ;
Where round the Flag of Glory the storm terrific blows
We march, we sail, whoever fail, the Flower of Essex
goes.

Lead the van, and may we lead it,
God of armies, till the wrong shall cease ;
Speed the war, and may we speed it
To the sweet home-coming, God of peace !

The Islands of the Sea

God is shaping the great future of the Islands of the Sea ;
He has sown the blood of martyrs and the fruit is liberty ;
Through thick clouds and in darkness He has sent abroad His
word ;

He has given a haughty nation to the cannon and the
sword.

He has seen a people moaning in the thousand deaths
they die ;

He has heard from child and woman a terrible dark cry ;
He has given the wasted talent of the steward faithless
found

to the youngest of the nations with His abundance
crowned.

He called her to do justice where none but she had
power ;

He called her to do mercy to her neighbor at the door ;
He called her to do vengeance for her own sons foully
dead ;

How often did He call unto her ere she inclined her head.

She has gathered the vast Midland, she has searched her
borders round ;

There has been a mighty hosting of her children on the
ground ;

Her search-lights lie along the sea, her guns are loud on
land ;

To do her will upon the earth her armies round her
stand.

The fleet, at her commandment, to either ocean turns ;
Belted around the mighty world her line of battle
burns ;

She has loosed the hot volcanoes of the ships of flaming
hell ;

With fire and smoke and earthquake shock her heavy
vengeance fell.

O joyfulest May morning when before our guns went
down

The Inquisition priesthood and the dungeon-making
crown,

While through red lights of battle our starry dawn burst
out,

Swift as the tropic sunrise that doth with glory shout !

Be jubilant, free Cuba, our feet are on thy soil ;
Up mountain road, through jungle growth, our bravest for
thee toil ;
There is no blood so precious as their wounds pour forth
for thee ;
Sweet be thy joys, free Cuba, — sorrows have made thee
free.

Nor Thou, O noble Nation, who wast so slow to wrath,
With grief too heavy-laden follow in duty's path ;
Not for ourselves our lives are ; not for Thyself art Thou ;
The Star of Christian Ages is shining on Thy brow.

Rejoice, O mighty Mother, that God hath chosen Thee
To be the western warder of the Islands of the Sea ;
He lifteth up, He casteth down, He is the King of Kings,
Whose dread commands o'er awe-struck lands are borne
on eagles' wings.

Children's Hymn

"Thy Kingdom come,"

**The Nation's children pray ;
And may the little patriots of the home
For Christ prepare the way !**

**Beneath the starry folds that o'er them wave
Shall they in strength increase ;
And may our youth be simple, kind, and brave,
And bring the reign of peace !**

**Far East, far West, far South, far North,
One home of brothers are ;
And may some cause to die for lead them forth
When they go out to war !**

**And may they nobly do and greatly dare,
And true be every son,
While o'er her children breathes the Nation's prayer,
"Thy Will be done !"**

To a Student

IF love within thee surely wake,
If springs the will's divine control,
Bear thou to see the ideal take
Imperfect form in thy young soul.

The Rose-giver

THICK from the banks my unreturning roses
I strew, love-singing, on the golden river ;
And every bud the poet's heart discloses ;
Oft, homesick for his songs, weeps the Rose-giver.

To Professor A. V. Williams Jackson

My Persian, leave the Eternal Fire,
 And leave to read the scented scroll,
 Páhlavi, Pali ; nor desire
 Always that glory to unroll,
 Your bright Avesta ; day and night
 God did divide with sun and star
 To show that equal in His sight
 Labor and rest, in mortals are.
 A fragment yet of unspent youth
 Is left ; and yours the social grace
 That finds sweet passages for truth,
 And brings the soul into the face ;
 As oft I prove, whose winter hour
 More than my blazing log you cheer,
 And dropping many a sudden flower
 Of Orient speech make Shiraz here,
 The while with golden-clouded pipes,
 Amid my books, at kindly ease,
 We seek to cast anew the types
 Of that old Truth which cannot cease, —

The dream that lights the heart's desire,
 The law that whirls the planet's frame,
 One in the never-dying fire,
 One in the never-lighted flame ;
 We strive to trace the world-wide lift
 Of man through poet, prophet, priest ;
 The tongues die out, the races shift,
 But evermore is God increased ;
 And who His flaming path shall bind,
 Which through the Zodiac's mystery runs ?
 Round Zoroaster, undivined,
 The same skies flashed a million suns.
 Still will you chase, uncaptured yet,
 The young wild-fire of Shelley's lore,
 And marvelling how the Magian met
 His Shadow in the garden, pore ;
 Till light the talk will smoothly veer
 To Shakspeare, and our England blend
 With Time's lone names — hid poets dear,
 Like him I prize, once Sidney's friend,
 Greville, wise matter gravely mixed,
 Whose thoughts, he said, were " eagles' food,"
 As ours should be, who late have fixed
 Our eyrie, lord of all the wood,

On Morningside ; young eagles there
Try with contention of their wings
Who first, with pinions smiting air,
The sunrise from his plumage flings —
Columbia's brood : there, even as saith
Our own glad Scriptures, under God,
She stirs the nest, she fluttereth
Over her young, and spreads abroad
Her wings, and taketh them, and bears
Them on her wings — ah, too soon flown,
Our eagles, gone to noble cares
And tasks of greatness all their own !
But few shall such a realm survey
As you have won, and, craving more,
Like Alexander, will not stay
Your Indian conquest, who before
Irân and Hellas ruled ; refrain
To tempt the heavens with doing well,
Lest, from my side too early ta'en,
Only your memory with me dwell.

But come ! now burns the autumn sea,
September-golden, languid blue,

Long morning hours ; till, wild and free,
 With wings as if the great deep flew,
 The wind comes up the harbor-mouth,
 And breaks the calm, and beads the crest,
 And hues the purple-watered South,
 And glitters down the fluttering West ;
 Day slowly dies, nor gathers gloom —
 A softer beauty ; faintly clear
 Through reaches of the rosy bloom
 Revolves the silver starry sphere ;
 Still blows the fragrant brine ; once more
 The island-gateways flood with light ;
 The moon is up ; put off from shore,
 And lapt on tides of wakeful night,
 And blowing with the canvas cloud,
 Know me in my Atlantic home —
 The wave-wet deck, the singing shroud,
 The rail half buried in the foam !
 Next morn, new joys. 'Twere long to tell
 This Essex ; I am grown too fond,
 Too many years have loved it well,
 And roved dark wood and lilied pond
 In my first days ; I promise you
 The bird's-nest, though the bird be flown ;

Come, learn the boy you never knew,
From odors of the pine-tree blown,
And heavy salt-scents of the sea,
And distant gleams, like Virgil's bough ;
So shall our mutual memories be
Life-whole, as love is heart-whole now.
Then shall you go from out the gold
October to your star-leaved Book,
And those gray manuscripts unrolled
Whereon the white-robed Parsees look,
And they forget these changing lights
Of morn and even, here below ;
To eyes like yours how must our Heights
Like snowy Alborz' sunrise glow !
So springeth there the dawning truth,
Forever breaking into morn,
Whose glory in the heart of youth
With Orient fire, each day, is born.

To E. M. O. On her Golden Wedding

O MOTHER heart, whose children, fair and strong,
And children's children round thy dear hearth stand,
A love-united and unbroken band,
While near them presses close a silent throng ;
Suffer me, too, to come, thy child of song,
As when in boyhood from the salt sea strand,
Thy wandering guest, unto the harvest land
I came ; whence all thy own to me belong.
God on thy head pour multiplied His grace,
And yield thee, nearer to the life divine,
Foregleams of light, touches of heavenly peace !
Long years the mother radiates from thy face,
And through long years shall still celestial shine
Unseen, nor in thy children ever cease.

Requiem

THOMAS RANDOLPH PRICE

SLEEP, soldier of the South, who loved me well !
In many a heart is heard thy passing bell,
Here in the North where thy last labor was,
And down lone valleys of the long lost cause
Where thy young mates, lapped in heroic sleep,
Their green peace, envied of the living, keep.
The harder lot was thine, — to live and toil
That sons as noble grace their native soil.
Sleep, gentle scholar of the golden lore
Of English speech, who from thy Attic store
Brought mastery of all tongues that poets use
And Europe ripens, sacred to the Muse !
O loyal nature, learnèd, eloquent,
Whose kindly courtesy to all men went,
I praise thee not for these, though worthy praise ;
These have I found not seldom in life's ways.
But the sweet patience which adorned thy life,
To take the blows of this half-brutish strife,

And, if on thee some natural griefs must rain,
With quietness to dignify thy pain, —
This, more than all the Muses' garnered art,
Taught reverence to my eyes, love to my heart ;
For thou hadst borne the worst, and learned to bear
All lesser sorrows in one great despair.
O much enduring soul who enterest peace,
Still shall our love for thee on earth increase ;
Now, poet, scholar, soldier, on death's plain
Sleep with thy early friends in battle slain !

To 1903, Columbia

TWELVE are the years Columbia gave to me ;
Twelve are the classes of happy memory ;
And yours the last of the twelve, and no more shall be.

But O, to say farewell and fond adieu !
Four years to me are dear, and dearer far to you ;
And the years, that seemed so many, are found too few.

I taught you the ways of life, as poets teach ;
Scott, Shelley, Tennyson, you heard me preach ;
Yet most through my own heart to your hearts I reach.

I taught you Shakspeare next, the infinite brain, —
Romeo, Hamlet, Lear, — our life of pain ;
And by my art I turned this woe to gain.

I taught you Plato in his masterhood,
Who, loving beauty, found thereby the good ;
Yet in myself nearer to you I stood ;

And more received, giving my brain and heart,
From whose exhausted springs new fountains start,
Because you made your lives of mine a part.

Where leaped the shell, my heart rowed with the crew ;
My hand was on the tape, where Bishop flew ;
Where broke the blue flag, I was there with you.

The years of football your bright records grace ;
Game called, you saw me always in my place ;
I taught your Harold the famed Fennel Race ;

And glad I saw him down the dazed field skim
In his first years ; and much I honor him,
Borne shoulder-high, until my eyes grow dim.

You wonder not who heard that April day,
I praised, loud-voiced, the perfect Harvard way
Of Marshall Newell, when I left the play.

Nor less, because I mingled with you so,
Shall you my intimate power, befriending, know,
Lifelong, within your souls, where'er you go.

O, why recall what was to me most dear,
The Crown, where duly, year by shining year,
The best Americans received our cheer?

Yet more, far more, generous you gave to me,—
Your banded hearts in perfect loyalty ;
Whence I your debtor must forever be.

A thousand times the loud Columbia cheer,
Linked with my name, has fallen upon my ear,
Sweeter and sweeter with each passing year,

Though yours the last with those of old combine ;
A thousand young Columbia hearts are mine,
Though yours the last, crowning the happy line

With love and honor, honor and love to one,
Whose labor for Columbia hearts is done,
Though not his love, a love not lightly won.

I murmur not, when fate has struck the ball ;
The work our hands have raised can never fall ;
Yet in my heart I grieve to end it all.

Not unto me be praise, the praise not mine ;
Praise ye the poets dead, and power divine
Whence they had strength ; pray God, their strength be
thine !

Break hands, and part ; but long this verse endures,
And love to all and each loyal assures,
With yours, and ever and ever yours, and yours.

Exeter Ode

READ AT THE DEDICATION OF ALUMNI HALL, PHILADELPHIA
EXETER ACADEMY, JUNE 17, 1903

I

THERE is no Heliconian spring
Nor fountain of perpetual youth
So much of Paradise can bring
As lights the haunt of early truth,
Here where budding boys together
Fill the world with April weather,
And the branch of life is breathing sweet ;
Sound of limb and pure of heart,
Eager tremblers for the start,
In the mimic arts of power they compete ;
And the ringing of the coming years is in their feet

We turn, and with fond gaze look back
On scenes that nurse their growing years,
The triumphs of the field and track,
The glory of the distant cheers,
Where they forge fresh strength and daring,
Schoolboy ensigns proudly wearing

To the victor-music in their blood ;
In the onset and the shock
Learn how human forces lock
To the banded bringing of the common good ;
And the youthful fighters melt in joyful brotherhood.

Now for us a dearer past remains
Which may their manhood, too, recall,
Higher pleasures, deeper pains,
That here heaven's grace let fall ;
Motions of the heart of youth
Beneath the brooding wings of truth ;
Burning clefts of opening heaven
To Paul by old Damascus given ;
The lonely hours, the unshed tears,
Sacred hopes and holy fears,
While rumors of the distant strife
Came drifting from the vague of life ;
These also to our high youth did belong ;
And the sad majesty of song,
The tragic load of Homer's age,
The breathing woe of Virgil's page,
Swept the young soul that yearns for home
Where save through death it shall not come.

Ah me, beneath this blue elm-branchèd sky
How many a boy since then comes nigh
To God in his infinitude,
As the sweet arbutus puts forth beneath the sighing
wood !

In every youth once beats the poet's heart,
While in his bosom these bright ardors start ;
And dearly then the affections, lorn and lone,
Cling round the breast where first a friend is known :
Hark, 'tis the rushing cries of life and sound of trumpet
blown !

II

Another morn has fired the world ;
A mightier labor is begun ;
A thousand standards bright unfurled
Lean forward from the rising sun.
Who are these the fresh hosts heading,
Prompt to lead and strong in stading,
To the old tradition grandly true ?
Whose that rock-like brow of fate,
Black with thunder of the state ? —
Round us when insidious discord falsely drew,
Freedom's barrier of men that great voice built anew.


There soldiers shine, there scholars walk,
Dark heroes plough the navied sea ;
And arms and letters interlock
To make our golden history.
These are they whose young eyes beaming
Under these dear elms went dreaming
What the world should be when they were men ;
Sinews of the upland farm,
Souls with old religion warm,
Never time brings here that wielding race again,
Equal lords of church and state, mace and sword and pen.

Forward ever move the endless rows
Upon the battle-tossing fields ;
Glory brightens where they close ;
Truth blazes from their shields ;
Servants not of brutal wars
That only leave a nation's scars ;
They have chosen better parts,
To serve mankind with healing arts,
To bring on earth humaner laws,
Lift o'er force persuasion's cause,
And ease the strife of rich and poor,
While love and peace grow more and more ;

They plant new virtues in their country's soil,
Wielding the world of modern toil
Whence science pours in ceaseless floods
The horn of man's beatitudes ;
Their treasury is knowledge free,
Their highest wisdom liberty ;
And glad their leading is, who, where they go,
The victor's track with blessings strew ;
Whose error-killing power entrains
Dethronèd superstitions dead, dead immemorial pains.
Unto this war we swore our youthful vow ;
Unto this war our sons press forward now
From this fair fount of civilizing power,
Where life's first vigor did our young limbs dower,
Loved in our loyal boyhood here, and loved in manhood
hour.

III

Guard well the Mother-eagle's nest
That stores the Northern granite's might,
Whence, ranging down the sunny West,
A hundred broods took flight !
There the golden fledglings slumber
Who the morning light shall cumber



With the clangor of their rising wings ;
Unto them from unborn years
Radiance of new glory nears,
And the rushing of their pinions music brings,
That the genius of the ageless world forever sings.

The noble lives that went before
Shall nourish best those hearts of youth,
The virtues of the men of yore
Establish them in ways of truth.
Set before their morning beauty
Our worn chieftains, great in duty,
Who in life's rich danger took their share !
Where is honor like to this,
Where is fame so touched with bliss
As to be remembered long and fairly there,
There to be remembered fairly where the thoughts of
boyhood were?

Honor to the brave, the wise, the good,
Whose lives in this old school began !
Our Exonian brotherhood
Earns gratitude of man.
Here let bronze and marble trace
The features of each vanished face ;

Stately portraits, looking down,
Show Bancroft's smile and Webster's frown,
Palfrey benign and Everett's grace,
Cass's craft and Phillips' race,
With Soule's and Abbott's hoary age,
And all our sons of heritage.
Here shall they grow, though haughty, high, and wise,
Familiar with youth's happy eyes ;
For even the greatest, life being done,
All labor o'er beneath the sun,
Shall nowhere find a nobler part
Than here to touch some fair boy's heart ;
They watch his going out and coming in,
Sink in his mind, and deeply win ;
They meet young thousands face to face
And from their silent seats they mix with this new race.
The youngest student heads our farthest hope,
Our edge and limit of prophetic scope ;
Ah, if, past death, our torch of life still flames,
Ah, here if boyhood treasures up our names,
This is the laurel's greenest growth, found fresh in younger
fames.

THE NORTH SHORE WATCH

•

The North Shore Watch

C. L. D.

OBITUARY MDCCLXXVIII

I

FIRST dead of all my dead that are to be,
Who at life's flush with me wast wont to roam
The pine-fringed borders of this surging sea,
From far and lonely lands Love brings me home
To this wide water's foam;
Here thou art fallen in thy joyful days,
Life quenched within thy breast, light in thy eyes;
And darkly from thy ruined beauty rise
These flowerless myrtle-sprays;
The hills we trod enfold thee evermore,
The gray and sleepless sea breaks round the orphaned
shore.

II

All things are lovely as they were, and still
They draw with gladness toward me as a friend;

The evening star doth touch me with the thrill
Of welcome, and the waves their voices blend
To hail my exile's end.

Oft while I wandered in those weary lands,
This dear-remembered shore would comfort
me,

Seeing in thought the everlasting sea
Washing his yellow sands ;

But now the scene I longed for gives me pain
Since he is dead, and ne'er shall feel its joy again.

III

Still planet, making beautiful the west,
Bright bringer of the stars and sheltered sleep,
Easing our hearts, as some beloved guest,
Whom for a little while our eyes may keep,
And through long years shall weep ;

O eloquent with flashes to the soul,
Even as his eyes beneath thy pure empire
Beamed the mute music of the heart's desire,
Thee, too, doth fate control ;

And brief as his thy hour of light must be —
To earth her starry hush, my solitude to me !

IV

Yet here our dayspring long ago was born,
While heaven still hovered near earth's dusky frame ;
Light touched the isles, and joyously the morn
O'erflowed the orient with prophetic flame,
And on the waters came,
Crimson and pearl, and woke the singing shore ;
On over murmuring waves the glad light swept ;
On through the west the loosened glory leapt
The far blue uplands o'er ;
And slowly rose the sun, and made the sea
White with his splendor, and filled heaven with purity.

V

Upon this beach we welcomed in the world,
And loved the lore of its wise solitude,
Where on the foaming sands the surges swirled,
Or broad, blue-belted calm, in blessed brood,
Lay many a shining rood ;
Here in that prime we kept our boyish tryst,
When woke our April and the need to rove ;
We trod the mantle that the white moon wove,
We pierced the star-looped mist ;

And ever where our eager feet might roam,
The air was morning, and the loneliest spot was home.

VI

The eloquent voices of the yearning sea
Called to us, strong as syllables of fate,
And, wafting in, like some lost memory,
Subdued us to the haunting hopes that wait
Round boyhood's rapt estate ;
The deep spell moved, a passion in our blood,
And made the throbbing of our hearts keep time
Unto the laughter of the waves, and chime
With thunders of the flood ; .
And subtly as a dream takes hue and form,
Our spirits clothed their youth in ocean's sun and
storm.

VII

Still would we watch, wave-borne from dawn to dark,
The pools of opal gem the windless bay ;
Or touch at eve the purple isles, and mark
Where, by the moon, far on the edge of day,
The shore's pale crescent lay ;

Or up broad river-reaches are we gone,
 Through sunset mirrored in the hollow tide —
 In beauty sphered, as some lone bird enskied,
 The halcyon boat drifts on,
 To twilight, and the stars, and deepest night,
 With phosphorescent gleams, and dark oars dropping
 light.

VIII

Ah, then a presence moved within this deep,
 That more than beauty made its regions dear ;
 O'er the long levels of its golden sleep
 The light that beams from the eternal year
 Flashed on the spirit clear ;
 And wheresoe'er we saw the ocean roll,
 With sounds of harmony his waves among,
 The song that breathed before the lyre was strung
 Gave echo to the soul ;
 And tremulous the immortal instincts woke
 That prophesy of Him in whom the sweet dawn broke.

IX

Alas, the faëry light that truth once wore !
 Alas, the easy questing of the heart !

When, by the hushed and visionary shore,
The dreaming hope, wherein all things have part,
Made our young pulses start !
Once, once I knew thy sweetness, O salt sea !
I reaped along thy furrows bearded grain ;
Thy groves, that never drink the sun nor rain,
Gave nectarous fruit to me ;
And all thy herbless pastures yielded wine,
Deep-hearted, fragrant, bright — ah, then his hand
clasped mine !

X

Ay, heart with heart companioned we went on,
And ever lovelier was the wooded shore ;
More joyous bloomed the May, and warmer shone
The slant light down the forest's muffled floor,
With music vaulted o'er ;
Ah, when the bluebird through the meadows darts,
Still yellow dogtooths gleam amid the brakes,
And fearlessly on all the green-leaved lakes
Lilies unfold their hearts ;
Earth's children slumber when the wild winds rise —
The tempest passes o'er, and heaven looks through their
eyes.

XI

But the dark pines, whose heart is like the sea's,
Mourn for one darling flower they nurtured here,
With morning fed, and deep, deep harmonies —
The sweetest blossom that the windy year
E'er rifled and left sere ;
Wake, O ye violets preluding the May,
And many a barren slope for beauty win !
Burst, O white laurels, flush your cups within,
And whisper, spray to spray !
But till the cypress buds, and blooms the yew,
The sylvan year brings not the love that once ye knew.

XII

Too swiftly fled the green and fragrant time !
Bleak on the vacant earth the North Wind fell,
Bitter and fierce, to beat the frozen clime,
In shrivelled fields and ruined woods to dwell,
And on the flood's black swell ;
But us the rude transformer could not change ;
We saw his pale dominions gleam afar,
His keen skies flash with many a friendlier star,
And, lo, the vision strange —

Dear to our faith — far in the alien north,
With faltering hues and faint, a dream of morn stole
forth.

XIII

Such presages before us ever went,
And flushed the skies with joyful heraldings ;
We trusted beauty — 'tis the element
Wherein the soul unfolds her poising wings,
And heavenward soars, and sings ;
But in the dawn and by the star-swept tides,
In dim melodious aisles of lonely pines,
We felt the heart of sorrow none divines,
That in all things abides ;
And borne on sighing winds came sounds of woe,
Whose burden well we knew, but he feared not to
know.

XIV

I saw the beauty of the early world
More lovely imaged in his lucid mind ;
Pure at his heart of innocence imperaled
Shone the white truth no search can ever find,
In love, as light, enshrined ;

Him nature folded childlike to her breast,
Gave him her peace, her strength, her ease, her joy ;
Fate could not move him, doubt could not annoy,
Nor sorrow, all men's guest ;
And woven of her music fell his voice
On the wide-glimmering eve, and bade my soul rejoice.

XV

" Ere yet we knew Love's name," he said to me,
" He gave the new earth to our boyish hands ;
For us morn blossoms, and the azure sea
Ruffles and smooths his long and gleaming sands
Upon a hundred strands ;
In green and gold the radiant mist exhales,
When through the willow buds the blue March blows,
And sowing Persia through the world the rose
Reddens our western vales ;
Clasped with the light, bathed with the glowing air,
Rest we in his embrace who made our paths so fair !

XVI

" Why fear we ? wherefore doubt ? is Love not strong,
Whose starry shield o'er-roofs our mortal way,

Who makes his home within our hearts lifelong,
An instinct to divine, a law to sway,
A hero's faith to stay?
See, all life beats responsive to his might;
Its yearning in his tameless hope began;
Its dawning triumph in the heart of man
Is his far-beaconing light;
He builds the empire of the golden years;
The red strife, too, is his, the field of blood and tears.

XVII

"Through Him we look toward life with conquering
eyes,
Nor swerve, nor falter, though his fire must blend
With our young hearts as flame with sacrifice,
Consuming all we are for that great end
He bids our souls befriend;
The laws invincible of his firm state
Work with us till the vision grows the fact,
And thought, slow-suppling into perfect act,
Makes our desire our fate;
Nor otherwise unto truth may man attain,
Though built in Shelley's heart, though orb'd in Shaks-
pere's brain.

XVIII

“His are we, as we were before we saw
The murder-strife that ravin cannot sate,
The fierce, incessant moan, the strokes of law,
The deep betrayal of our birth and state
That baffles us with fate ;
Be life's inevitable sadness ours,
The evil that we cannot help but will,
The good with viewless consequence in ill,
Our maimed and thwarted powers !
Nor yet” — I hear him say — “repining know,
The shadow-clouded earth through the blue deep must go.

XIX

“It moves, and plunges to the central sun,
Its paltry ruin flashes, and is gone ;
The stars, indifferent, their calm courses run,
The constellations shine as erst they shone,
The clustered heavens go on ;
Who shall foresee of all the one blind doom
When darkness shall inhabit torpid space,
Still, starless, orphaned of dawn's lovely face,
Unfathomable tomb ! —

Yet may the soul pitch her adventure high,
With beauty and with love impassioned, though we die.

XX

“Beauty that sings of unisons unseen,
Bright emanation of consenting laws,
In flower, wave, shell, blue skies, and pastures green,
The passing of the power that hath no pause,
That knows nor fate nor cause ;
The thrill of life aye pulsing through the void,
With rhythmic motions felt in sun and star,
And galaxies of splendor streaming far,
Nor in their woe destroyed ;
The presence wonderful, beneath, above —
In the lone heart of man it wakes, incarnate Love.

XXI

“It hallows all, the aureole He wears
Whom frail mortality hath never bound ;
Who in his hands the burning sphere upbears,
Though stars grow gray, their dateless ruin found,
And perish in their round ;

He is — and, lo, 'tis loveliness we see,
The heavens majestic, and the joyous earth ;
Is not — and all the glory and the mirth
Are things of memory ;
Long, long o'er us be his divine control —
The beauty of the world, the rapture of the soul ! ”

XXII

Such musings ours upon the moonlit shore,
While dark with motion sways the luminous tide ;
On come the long, black waves, and, whitening o'er,
Fall, far-resounding, eddy, and divide,
And up the smooth sands glide :
So, life-engirdling, shone eternal truth,
So darkly luminous, so swift, so strong,
Flooding our mortal brink, it broke along
The winding shores of youth ;
There silent, glad, in Love's repose we lay —
Calm was among the stars, peace on the heaving bay.

XXIII

O, wherefore could we not forever dwell
In that seclusion of the world new-born,

Where on our passive youth the promise fell
That dawns beneath the sweet brows of the mom,
The light none lives to scorn !
Too soon we left the haunts of boyish thought ;
Moored swung the boat beside the shining sea ;
The arethusas flowered in secrecy,
And fell, unloved, unsought ;
Lone the rare cardinal, autumn's herald, stood ;
The bittersweet gleamed red in the deserted wood.

XXIV

One watch was ours ; far o'er the ebbing sea,
Heavy and dark, the rainy shadows lay ;
From his familiar door he walked with me
To that broad hill, grown dear in boyhood's day,
The old field-trodden way ;
Chill rose the mists, and faint the distant roar
Of ocean sounded ; our old seat we took
Silent and sad ; cold autumn's dying look
The summer landscape wore ;
We minded not — in our hearts shadows were
The wide earth harbors not, housing their misery there.

XXV

The Hour sprang forth from universal time,
Of his joy-hearted race the last sad Hour ;
Crowned heir of all his brothers of the prime,
Bodied more nobly, girt with secret power,
Starred with love's passion-flower ;
Through night he sprang, and black the flakes of gloom
Fled, afar off, the lustre of his feet ;
Our hill he sought, and made the darkness sweet,
Staying the wand of doom ;
And dear as from the Grail's all-precious sight,
Grace from his presence flowed, and fell on us as light.

XXVI

We seemed to live within the soul alone
Of sorrow's silent love the loftier mood ;
The spirit, vibrant to love's perfect tone,
Sang love that was, more subtly understood,
In love to be, renewed ;
And was death hovering there, with shades of woe,
Round that dear head the sullen frosts confine ? —
Dear hands, dear lips, dear eyes, I knew thee mine,
Mine, mine, where'er I go !

The Hour was dead ; we rose, we took our ways,
Forever lost to sight through all the exiled days.

XXVII

O Song, move softly through the laurelled lyre,
O melancholy music breathing woe ;
With strains that trembling loose love's wild desire,
And waft it to its peace, through sorrow go,
With ocean pauses, slow !
Strike nobler notes, O laden as thou art,
That die not on the ear with dying tones ;
O, touch the finer chords man's nature owns
To ease the breaking heart ;
And harmonies that of the soul partake,
Heard in the days of joy, in evil days awake !

XXVIII

Heavy is exile wheresoe'er it be !
Or where his armored ship's strong bows divide
Green, empty hollows of the Afric sea,
Or where my broad-browed prairies, westering
wide,
A race of men abide ;

And life in exile is a thing of fears,
A song bereaved of music, a delight
That sorrow's tooth doth feast on, day and night,
A hope dissolved in tears,
A poem in the dying spirit — aught
Lost to its use and beauty, desolate, idle, naught !

XXIX

Heavy is exile wheresoe'er it be !
To miss the sense of love from out the days ;
To wake, and work, and tire, nor ever see
Love's glowing eyes suffused with tender rays —
Darling of human praise !
To lose love's ministry from out our life,
Nor gentle labor know for dear ones wrought,
When once love lorded the thronged ways of thought,
And quelled the harsh world strife ;
To feel the hungering spirit slowly stilled,
While hours and months and years the barren seasons
build.

XXX

Ever to watch, like an unfriended guest,
The sun rise up and lead the days through heaven,

The silent days, on to the flaming west,
The unrecorded days, to darkness given,
Unloved, unwept, unshriven ;
With our great mother, Earth, to live alone ;
To clasp in silence Wisdom's moveless knees ;
To fix dumb eyes, that know fate's whelming
seas,
On her eternal throne ;
While better seems it, were the soul sunk deep
In life's death-mantled pool, sealed in oblivious sleep !

XXXI

"Alas," I cried, beneath the sun-bright sky,
"What profits it to search what Athens says —
To heap a little learning ere we die,
Blind pilgrims, walk the world's deserted ways,
And lose the living days ;
To cheat sad memory's self with storied woes ;
To summon up sweet visions out of books
Wherein old poets have enshrined love's looks ;
To seek in pain repose ;
O, cup of bitterness he too must taste,
Shut in his homeless ship upon the salt sea-waste !"

XXXII

What though o'er him the tropic sunset bloom,
With hyacinthine hues and sanguine dyes,
And down the central deep's profoundest gloom
Soft blossoms, fallen from the wreathèd skies,
The seas imparadise?
With light immingling, colors, dipped in May,
Through multitudinous changes still endure —
Orange and unimagined emeralds pure
Drift through the softened day ;
"Alas," he whispers, "and art thou not nigh?
Earth reaches now her height of beauty ere I die."

XXXIII

And I give answer, — "Would that he were here !
Three halos, crescent-horned, of purest grain,
In shadowless keen ether burning clear,
In morn's blue eastern depths, a glory, reign,
Burn brighter, burn, and wane ;
Never to us," I whisper, "by that strand
Stepped morn, so diademed upon the sea ;
Sweet wanderer, joyous shall thy roaming be
Across this wind-swept land !

Urge on thy western flight and die in bliss !
On those unsheltered waves his temples didst thou
kiss."

XXXIV

Brief now his voyaging is o'er those far seas,
By shoal and reef that the lost mariner mock,
By lands of palm that nurse the poisoned breeze,
And pillared isles whose foam-girt bases rock
With the tornado's shock ;
The branding suns smite down on glassy waves ;
They sink ; on high strange stars malignant roll,
The regents of the pale, untravelled pole,
Whose coasts no mortal braves :
Why will he on? — Come back, O bleeding heart !
O stricken soul, return ! Death hunteth where thou
art.

XXXV

Eager as sea-birds from their bonds set free,
He sought the ancient harbors of his home ;
The Southern Cross fell in the frozen sea,
And stars of gladness, washed in northern foam,
His boyhood heavens upclomb ;

Once more beneath the tender spring he drinks
 The fountains of his youth for which he yearned ;
 The beauty of the shore, like love returned,
 Deep in his spirit sinks ;
 The violets linger, wide the laurels bloom —
 Alas, the flowering earth is his eternal tomb !

XXXVI

Moan, melancholy Ocean, he is dead
 In whom thou hadst thy life, thy throbbing joy !
 Our woe, O melancholy Ocean, shed
 In music round thy ever-strangered boy,
 Whom the blind deeps destroy !
 Waken, dark pines ! that ruinous eclipse
 Hath broke the tender league of musing youth,
 And shut love's insights and the hopes of truth
 Within his parted lips ;
 I take, ay me, no welcome from his hands —
 He comes not through the wood, nor down the shadowy
 sands.

XXXVII

From him the lone sun doth withhold his light ;
 To him lorn eve her western star denies ;

218 THE NORTH SHORE WATCH

But O, a lovelier world hath sunk in night,
 Its music-breathing fields, its dreaming skies,
 Dark in his darkened eyes ;
The rapturous element is still, in him,
 And all of nature that can perish, dead ;
 Oblivion gathers o'er his obscure head ;
 Death binds him, face and limb ;
Earth-sundered soul, no beauty now he knows,
Nor sense nor act of love sweetens his long repose.

XXXVIII

On crag and beach I hear his threnody ;
 I touch the myrtles clinging round his grave ;
But weak is all that severs him from me,
 Faint and far off, although my heart will crave
 The old response he gave ;
No, not the moaning waves nor sighing pines
 Persuade my soul of loss, nor blinding tears —
 I love him, I shall love through lonely years,
 Where'er my life declines ;
 I lean my head down to the flowerless sod —
I feel his shepherding as when on earth he trod.

XXXIX

Mortality sways not, while heaven shall last,
The starry years that were when he was mine ;
Death blots not out a fair-recorded past,
Whose meanings deeper are than men divine,
Who write it, line by line ;
The years of noble life are pledges deep,
That bind futurity our souls to friend ;
Woe cannot cancel them, nor far time end
The privilege they keep ;
They live — their light still blessed where it leads,
Their hoarded music loosed, pure song, in perfect deeds.

XL

Yea, he to whom Love was as God is dead ;
Cold, mute, and dark, he unresponsive lies ;
A joyless form, the kindling presence fled,
The spirit faded from his wistful eyes ;
No more will he arise !
Yet not in vain was our adoring trust,
Our deep-vowed fealty, our service done ;
To finer issues love that was lives on,
Nor moulders into dust :

Of Love, the Giver, still my song must be,
The Victor, Love, repeat, whose grace descends on me.

XLI

Love blends with mine the spirit I deplore,
Like music in sweet verse that lasts for aye ;
While yet we wandered by our native shore,
He sent the blessings for which all men pray,
That cannot pass away ;
He wrought with ministries of star and flower
And the gray sea, to build our lives secure ;
He made the sources of the spirit pure,
And with truth lent us power ;
And him to me He gave — and lo, his gift
Is changeless, and doth now my soul from death uplift.

XLII

On deepest night arisen, the morning star
Trembles across the wide, unquiet sea,
And heavenward springs, with influence felt afar —
The world's new hope he leads, the day to be,
The life that waits for me ;
Speed on, glad star, and golden be thy flight,

Inviolable, serene, the waters o'er !
Fear not the eclipsing west, O born to soar,
And, dying, die in light !
Bring, bring the morning with her tides of song,
Her floods of amber air, breaking earth's heights along.

XLIII

Beauty abides, nor suffers mortal change,
Eternal refuge of the orphaned mind ;
Where'er a lonely wanderer, I range,
The tender flowers shall my woes unbind,
The grass to me be kind ;
And lovely shapes innumerable shall throng
On sea and prairie, soft as children's eyes ;
Morn shall awake me with her glad surprise ;
The stars shall hear my song ;
And heaven shall I see, whate'er my road,
Steadfast, eternal, light's impregnable abode.

XLIV

Love, too, abides, and smiles at savage death,
And swifter speeds his might and shall endure ;
The secret flame, the unimagined breath,

That lives in all things beautiful and pure,
Invincibly secure ;
In Him creation hath its glorious birth,
Subsists, rejoices, moves prophetic on,
Till that dim goal of all things shall be won
Men yearn for through the earth ;
Voices that pass we are of Him, the Song,
Whose harmonies the winds, the stars, the seas, prolong.

XLV

Break, surging sea, about the lovely shore !
O dimly heaving plains, through darkness sweep !
Thy restless waves, with morning stars roofed o'er,
Their incommunicable secret keep,
Impenetrable deep !
The eldest years on time's oblivious verge
Saw thee through tempest-weltering night uplift
Great, mountainous continents amid thy drift,
And their tall peaks submerge ;
The vast, abysmal, wandering fields moved on,
Whelming the wasteful wreck of the old world undone.

XLVI

And still round mortal shores thy billows roll,
And shall through long, long ages yet unborn ;

Lone splendor of the sense-illumined soul,
Eternal moaning of the spirit lorn,
By strokes of loss outworn ;
Thy terrors image our blind mortal state,
Dark with impending doom and whirling woe,
And monsters in thy bosom come and go,
And death is thy fell mate ;
Ah yet, through sun and storm, gray ocean, roll,
Love clasps thy mighty tides in his profound control.

XLVII

Surge on, thy melancholy is not doom !
Surge, O wan sea, into the golden day !
The morn is breathing off thy purple gloom,
The isles lift up their promise, dim and gray,
Love holds his dauntless sway !
Thy ripples kiss the shore with lips of foam,
Thy waves are dawning soft — the winds blow free !
Keep thou the eternal watch, O dear, dear sea,
Those far lands I must roam !
Lo, 'tis the sunrise — and the sphered stars move,
Singing unseen, like silent thoughts through silent love.



AGATHON

THE ARGUMENT

The following dramatic poem takes its origin in that mood of a young and sensitive temperament in which the transience of life is first perceived, and is most deeply felt in the passing away of beauty; to remain in this mood were to despair. But the desire which in early youth is fed by mortal loveliness has an eternal object, to the perception of which the soul must win, binding round about it new and diviner affections. Agathon, the poet of Plato's Symposium, typifies such youth; and the poem here discloses his passage to the higher conception by means of the Platonic thought and imagery. Diotima, the wise preceptress of Socrates, instructs him; Eros, the desire of beauty, is his companion and guide; the youth, under the spell of Anteros (whose character is taken from the later phases of the Greek myth) encounters love in its transient mortal form — Venus Pandemos — but his noble nature perceives therein the essence and concentration of that death which has daunted him in the world; and although he feels the impairment of his purity by the fact of his temptation, he is led by Eros to the presence of the Uranian Venus, who sets forth to him (as Diotima had also done in a prophetic manner) the eternal element in which life itself has its ground of being. The obligations of the poem to Plato are plain; and for those who are familiarized with Platonic ways of thought and the ordinary conceptions of philosophic idealism, the poem, perhaps, notwithstanding its artistic faults, has no more obscurity than by necessity belongs to its matter. The passage of the soul through love of the beauty that is seen to love of the beauty that is unseen, whereby it escapes from the dominion of time and death in the senses, is the theme.

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THE CHARACTERS

EROS, the god of Desire

DIOTIMA, the prophetess of Mantinea

AGATHON, the poet

PHANTASM

URANIA, unseen

Agathon

SCENE I

Before DIOTIMA'S cave. EROS enters

EROS

BETWEEN the gods who live and mortal men
I am the Intercessor, Eros called,
Fathered in heaven, but earth did mother me ;
Whence is my nature mixed of opposites,
Unquenchable desire, want absolute,
And is near neighbor unto human fate.
The edict of Necessity besides
Bids own that kinship ; for I come not home
Except my errand done, which ever is
To break the mystery of love to men,
Freeing themselves and me ; not without me
Find they the Immortals ; without them my wings
Blade not, nor from the gleaming shoulder break,
But by the warmth of love those plumes unsheathe ;
Wherefore I ever speed to win men's hearts.

The sculptor, of the form within the stone ;
The poet, of the very breath he draws ;
Users of heavenly trust, unmindful all.
They waste my gifts ; I gave them not from earth
To nourish life alone, but from the gods
Who fashioned them to foster the young soul
In reverence, gratitude, and humbleness.
Yet some, whose eyes were more divinely touched
In that long-remembered world whence souls set forth,
Discern the holy meaning of the gift,
Which who receives aright receives the god.
The rest esteem it as a thing their own
And common, and neglect to know the gods ;
And me, their messenger, they thrust without ;
And here I wander in the ways of men,
Hungry and poor, and begging for my bread ;
And oft my feet print blood what time I leave
Inhospitable, hard, and kindless doors.
But where some noble soul makes his abode,
And bids me enter in and lodge with him,
Beautiful am I as the gods in heaven ;
His thatch, though lowly, unto them is known,
The rushes of his floor are loved of men,
And who live there behold me as I am.

One such I seek for now, the flower of Greece,
Young Agathon ; to men hereafter known
(If I but thrive as I have hope to do)
More than her athlete's olive-cinctured brows,
Wrestler, or runner, or swift charioteer,
His cherished name endears her memory.
A spirit of joy he is, to beauty vowed,
Made to be loved, and every sluggish sense
In him is amorous and passionate.
Whence danger is ; therefore I seek him out,
So with pure thought and awe of things divine
To touch his soul that he partake the gods.
Now here he comes with that wise prophetess
Who reared his youthful wisdom ; I, awhile,
Will stand and mark them ; sweet is their discourse.
[EROS *retires*.

DIOTIMA *and* AGATHON *enter, and seat themselves near
the cave*

DIOTIMA

What robs thee, Agathon, of thy delight,
That thou art fallen in grave and silent ways,
Nor longer wilt divide thy breast with me ?

AGATHON

I would obey the gods, but see not how.

DIOTIMA

Hast thou forgotten? But youth ever fears,
And, like the fledgling on the low nest's edge,
Thinks not how instant heaven receives its wings
And bears them up unseen. The reed once knew
Thy boyish warble ; long the lyre expects
When thou shalt touch Apollo's waiting strings,
Thy name be golden on the lips of men.
Not idly do the gods bestow their gifts.

AGATHON

Long silent hangs the lyre, silent my heart.
I cannot sing ; I am too much betrayed
By this too fickle world that robbeth me.
Beauty herself hath fed me on despair ;
And the deep change which doth infect all things
Lessons the soul in death, by beauty taught
More than by gross decay. Change, change is here !
Still seems the region as the land I loved —
Seems, but is not ; something hath fallen between,
Strangeness and severance that the exile feels

Returning to his haunts from roving years ;
No stay for him is there ; he turns and goes ;
For he has robbed his father's quiet fields
Of Nature's sweet horizons ; nevermore
The sky shall rest upon the hills for him ;
His bounds are of the soul ; his rims of heaven
The visions which his wayward eyes have caught ;
And what that gleam hath whispered to his heart
He cannot all forget. This have I learned
From the revolving hours, and fear it much,
And hide it in my breast, as wise men do,
Lest truth should prove contagion to the world.
Woe be to us, to us alone the woe !
The solitude in loveliest places felt,
The heart estranged from earth, but undivine,
The soul aware of that which heaven withholds —
Poets whose eyes the goddess lights and blinds,
To be than mortals more, but less than gods !

DIOTIMA

Hath beauty so bereaved thee, nor love crowned ?

AGATHON

Thou knowest it, because thou smilest so ;
Yet pity in that smile confession makes

Of thoughts not unacquainted with my own.
I do remember 'twas on such a night
As spreads this silver silence on the earth
On the sea-cape I watched the brooding wave ;
Only the moon my meditation shared,
Nor any sound save of the voiceful deep
Among the white crags of my solitude ;
I saw its loveliness, and sighed to see ;
And stretching out my palms to the bright air,
“ Wherefore art thou so beautiful, my life ? ”
I cried ; and knew in heaven a subtle change,
Celestial fading, and the pale approach
Of morning in the east ; and all my thoughts
Fled thence, as from the gray dawn fled the stars.
The time was disenchanted, not my soul ;
And oft on some clear height, some curving shore,
From beauty's momentary trance I woke
As from another world ; flown was the light
That wooed me to such sweet oblivion,
But not from memory flown ; still must I mourn
That every lovely thing escapes the heart
Even in the moment of its cherishing.
O young regret that still will turn desire !
For Nature wounds and orphans while she charms

Her dearest lover ; no perfection hers,
And no continuance ; change, forever change !
Stars shine where morning was, morn dims the stars ;
Spring follows spring, and all our autumns roll
Morrow on morrow mourning yesterday ;
So mutable is this dissolving sphere ;
Aloft and under — change, forever change !
And we like sailors on the inconstant deep —
The moon-driven rack, the rout of wind-swept waves,
Are earth and heaven ; the whole world slips below.

DIOTIMA

Truth is not given as pearls, my Agathon.
There is a light within, and that must shine
Before the soul can see ; o'er Nature's world,
The flux and all the ruin of her sway,
Is the eternal ; there the gods abide.

AGATHON

The gods are hard to seek, but sure they are.
I have not yet my boyhood so unlearned
But with my soul I keep some privacy ;
Such as each spirit owns what time it wakes
And broods and ponders on what things must be

To match its nature ; then what thoughts were mine !
Desire and dream were undiscovered then !
I rode the dark-ribbed waves, Poseidon's son ;
The ample ether kissed me, sprung from Zeus ;
Apollo wrapt me in his golden beams
Like some proud elder brother ; as a star
Upon the unregarded edge of heaven
Knows not his brethren of the crowded host,
Before their beauty timorous, yet feels
His isolate nature one with theirs divine,
So my young spirit felt beyond the sense
Something at one with it that made the world
Its shining element — O, wherefore bright
Unless the gods, making such glad proclaim,
Would break their secrecy through Nature's tongues,
And unprofaned do borrow of the soul
Some sweet forewarnings? — upon this I mused,
When morning flashed on great Athene's spear,
Pacing within her temple. On one hand
The violet landscape through the columns glowed —
Ægina and the olive-coasted gulf
Empurpling to the far Corinthian gleam ;
Ilissus reed-beloved ; Hymettus flowering ;
On white Pentelicus the cloud-hung pines !

At every step more fair with lovelier change
The scene passed by, in those white columns framed,
Porches of heaven ; upon the other side
Was I o'ershadowed by the eternal frieze,
That only seemed to move, but ever stayed,
Horsemen and maidens in the marble march,
Athene's people, bearing evermore
Praise to Athene ; beautiful they stood
Before her coming, mixed with forms divine —
Men worthy to be gods, gods to be men ;
And waking from my trance, I saw them shine,
Nor knew the change from the eternal world.

DIOTIMA

'Tis the god's doing : O, follow, follow there !
Create what thou desirest, Agathon.
Cling not to Nature ; of eternity
Some glimpses live that counsel the divine
In the brief shadows of this mortal being.
The light that fills the temple thence proceeds ;
And all the Phidian art and mastery
Is but the spirit bringing like the gods
The light it shines by ; only it creates
And truly fashions ; Nature's works decay ;

It hath a higher and immortal craft ;
It is the parent of eternal form.
Not in the sphere the song that moves it sings,
But in the soul ; 'tis Nature's element,
Her shaping principle, her other frame,
Locking old Chaos in the rhyme of law ;
Its influence exceeds this sensual reach ;
It doth invest the very gods with charm ;
Such deity resides within the soul.
O, wert thou Orpheus, or the shepherd boy
Apollo loved amid his Thracian flocks,
Thy lyre must from thyself bring harmony,
Whose unlocked music builds the world divine.

AGATHON

One must be born again to breathe that world.

DIOTIMA

Not once, but many times the soul is born
Before the mortal body wastes away
That it inhabits ; it is born in sense,
And like a thing of Nature in what is
Lives momentary ; born in memory next,
In time's dark shadow and eclipse it builds

The insubstantial world where Nature hath
Her only immortality ; nor long
Consents to tarry with that second death,
And to eternize loss ; but, risen aloft,
Is in imagination born, whose throe
Is Nature's dissolution. Nature dies
In uttering the ideal ; earth below
Is stubble, stars the refuse of the thought,
That works in time and death, denying both
And all the world of change, and winnows thence
The inviolable and perfect element,
And sees the gods afar. But more remains,
This but the darkness dreaming in the mind
And increate creation ; for the soul
Works not its dream ; yet through belief it may
If it believe ; such premonition hath
The quick eternal nature in it lodged —
Immortal travail, thoughts that at their birth
Have touches of necessity, and shape
Themselves the life to come ; in faith 'tis born ;
In what shall be it breathes, till that last change
When it shall lay its mortal nature off,
In what eternal is, eternal live.

AGATHON

O, eloquent and noble as desire
Thy doctrine is, charming as melody ;
Beyond the reach of thought we follow it —
Whither, oh, whither?

DIOTIMA

Here repose thyself
Upon the flinty rock, the dreamer's couch ;
For oft in dreams the gods do visit us —
Or what seem dreams — and then we wake and find
Only the ideal has reality.

[DIOTIMA *enters the cave*, AGATHON *sleeps*.

EROS *comes forward singing*. AGATHON *wakes*

When love in the faint heart trembles,
And the eyes with tears are wet,
O, tell me what resembles
Thee, young Regret?
Violets with dewdrops drooping,
Lilies o'erfull of gold,
Roses in June rains stooping,
That weep for the cold,
Are like thee, young Regret.

Bloom, violets, lilies, and roses !
But what, young Desire,
Like thee, when love discloses
Thy heart of fire ?
The wild swan unreturning,
The eagle alone with the sun,
The long-winged storm-gulls burning
Seaward when day is done,
Are like thee, young Desire.

AGATHON

Who art thou that dost echo on thy lips
The unspoken heart that pains with silent throb
And thoughts ineffable the aching side ?

EROS

A wanderer who sings from land to land ;
A single night he lodges where he sings,
And goes ere morning. Subtle is the song
And sweet ; which, if thy heart shall entertain,
'Tis destiny, eternal joy or woe.

AGATHON

There is a princely pleading in thy looks,
Yet doth this fair-demeanored courtesy

Show with a borrowed favor, as if a god,
With lowly bending of his attributes
And gentle usage of humility,
Should be a suppliant. So Apollo once
Among the herdsmen came, but godlike sang.

EROS

A god I am, though mortal now I seem.

AGATHON

I have heard tales of gods who mixed with men
When men were heroes and divinely sprung ;
But whether by compulsion of strict fate
Or by corruption of our long descent,
The way is lost, and scarce may Hermes' self
Retrace his golden sandals' gleaming track
To guide us hence, whence all the gods are gone.

EROS

Not gone from thee or any mortal man
Who trusts them, though of pride-emboldened eyes
They suffer not the near and curious gaze ;
But whom they love they leave not uninspired.
I am their messenger, and joy I bring.

Long have I sought, and loved thee ere I saw ;
Now take my heart of longing to thy breast ;
Suffer my leading : I alone lead true,
And strip the ambush on the paths of peril,
And hedge the flowery way with innocence.
Eros I am, the wooer of men's hearts.
Unclasp thy lips, yield me thy close embrace ;
So shall thy thoughts once more to heaven climb,
Their music linger here, the joy of men.

AGATHON

Take my poor friending, such as man may give
Whose only having is a human heart ;
This be thy pillow and thy breast my guard,
Both loyal lovers till the world shall end !
For thou dost seem all mortal, and dost crave
An equal bond ; and far that journey lies
(So strong is prescience here), and long, alas,
Hath that young trust that was about my heart
Flown forth, the bird of roaming, through the world —
Oft lost in heaven, oft fluttering back to earth,
Builds in the morn and nests in darkening waves,
The tired wing not vain, nor vain the song.
And now my soul must follow after it,

Going with thee ; with thee needs must I go ;
For had one planet launched our lives at birth,
And had one sun harnessed our golden days,
And one dear memory shrined our jewels up,
Thou couldst not more prevail. O, thou hast ta'en
My heart into thy breast ; my faith lies there,
And I must follow !

Thy kisses make me faint,
And, tremulously sweet, ambrosial flame
Steals in my blood, with heavenly vigor bright.
Upon what stream shall this high passion slake ?
Not sun-kissed wine that bursts the blooded grape,
Cold Castaly, nor any nectared draught
That whispers Hebe's secret, shall dull this pain,
Nor any dark-leaved herb of melancholy
Lull it to sleep.

EROS

There is a fount more clear
Than gave Narcissus to himself, more pure
Than on Tiresias flashed Athene's form,
And softer to the touch than Venus' bath.
If thou canst win unto that crystal brook,
And if but once thy lips kiss that bright flow,

Was never Beauty's paragon more blessed,
Nor Wisdom's lover so by her desired,
Nor darling Adon to the goddess dear.
While this sweet passion sorrows in thy breast
Unto that heavenly fount thou'rt each day nigh;
There shalt thou learn the mystery of thyself,
How thou art mortal to become a god.
But now the night wears on, and long the way.

AGATHON

How short a time thou givest to my love !

EROS

Nor long, nor short ; but when I go from thee
The interval is all ; against that hour
Whisper thy heart into my breast to-night,
And I in turn will treasure mine in thee.

[They enter the cave together.]

SCENE II

DIOTIMA'S *cave within.* AGATHON and EROS *enter*

AGATHON

How hast thou stolen within my heart ! even there,
Sweet fabler, fable on, with myth and tale
That thronged before the eyes of poets gone !
O, only once to breathe young Attic air,
Cithæron rove, or Ida's slumber know,
A guiltless Paris by Ænone's side !
Dream thou, my heart ! for Love so made our frame
And shut his empire in a maid's white arms,
And in a woman's kiss his sovereignty.
For this Poseidon hath his trident bowed ;
For this great Zeus let the leashed thunder sleep
And the bird drowse beside the empty throne ;
For this did Enna blossom, and with strewn spring
Love's footprints bud in hell ; even but for this
Did Dian's self lay her white bow aside
And hush a thousand hymns of sanctity !

Love comes in youth, and in the wakeful heart
Delight begins, soft as Aurora's breath
Fretting the silver waves, and dimly sweet
As stir of birds in branches of the dawn.
So soft, so sweet, thy touches round my heart.
O, fable, fable on !

EROS

I fable not,
But as the sense is fashioned sees the mind,
And as the tongue is languaged hears the ear,
And as the heart is chambered lives the soul ;
Illusion binds us ! [*The scene darkens.*]


Alas, he hears me not,
And by the darkening of the way I know
Anteros, him, my brother, born with me,
Who will contest for this most noble prize.
His bright enchantment oft my image steals
And silences my voice ; and power is his ;
Whatever loveliness doth dwell in sense
Ministers to him, many gentle thoughts,
Fair shapes, forever beautiful to man,
And dear with tenderness that touches most

ire hearts and young. Look down, sweet heaven, now,
and nearer bend thy light, and shine within !

*[The scene brightens disclosing, as the two advance,
what seems a lake under the cave's high-vaulted
rock.]*

AGATHON

arkness itself doth change ; and in my breast
expectancy doth like a spirit sit
and helms me on ; and deep within my heart
such unrest, that sweetens as it grows,
excess makes nature faint. Now might I hear
the music of the bright Sicilian reef,
ought over heaving seas by mariners lost,
the sea-child's harp of joy ; or whatso else
storied in the tales of mortal love,
of dragon-damsels in the woodland met,
of river-maidens in their golden hair.
The dark way flames ; the gross and threatening rock
; the fair element doth softly burn
with violet rays, whose stealing lambency
obduces these awful ledges up aloft,
melting with darkness there ; and, isled below,
this chasm of radiance, this bloom of light,




This purple fragment of crag-shadowed seas
Where Naiads slumber ! Grottoes 'neath the wave,
Where the unbodied spirit of the air
Laves his blue lustre in the sunless stream,
Dissolve such hues ; such still ethereal tints
Within their sapphire caves the glaciers hush,
Light's mountain hermitage ; and, soft-embarked,
What vision pulses on the brightening air ? —

[*The PHANTASM appears floating upon the lake.*

How fair she lies within the purple shell,
Couched in the halo of a golden mist
That drops its pale light o'er her flowing limbs !

The PHANTASM

'Tis sweet to roam ; O, sweet in breaking dawns
To speak with Light, the pilgrim beautiful ;
To hear and follow with earth's roaming soul !
The wingèd winds forsake their craggy nests ;
The singing birds take flight and glow in air ;
The pale mists slip their golden anchorage ;
The white clouds lead them on ; for all the gates
Of heaven stand open. Who would linger then ?
The sweetest roamer is a boy's young heart ;
Sweet is his roaming, for his heart is young.



O youngest Roamer, Hesper shuts the day,
White Hesper folded in the rose of eve ;
The still cloud floats, and kissed by twilight sleeps ;
The mists drop down, and near the mountain moor ;
And mute the bird's throat swells with slumber now ;
And now the wild winds to their eyries cling.

The youth divine, — where now lays he his head ?
The sea roves on, and rove the awful stars,
Unalterable as when the young gods woke
And alien gazed upon the mystery
That hopes not nor remembers, with strange eyes ;
And he, too, gazes, and his heart still roves.

Ah, dark he roams whom sea and stars waft on
To voyage and venture, and to peril all,
Still wandering with the silver-footed waves,
Still coursing with the globes of fiery flight,
A mortal he, but they eternal are.

Now where for him shall end the darkening search,
Whose feet are bound with sandals of the dust ?
The waste desire be his, and sightless fate :
Him light shall not revisit ; late he knows
The love that mates with heaven weds in the grave.

O youngest Roamer, wonderful is joy,
The rose in bloom that out of darkness springs,

The lily folded to the wave of life,
The lotus on the stream's dark passion borne ;
'Tis hidden far from dawn, and shut from eve ;
The shore wave never kissed ; the starless bower.

Ah, fortunate he roams who roameth there,
Who finds the happy covert and lies down,
And hears the laughter gurgling in the fount,
And feels the dreamy light imbathe his limbs.
No more he roams ; he roams no more, no more.

AGATHON

How sweet a freight of beauty lieth here !
And like a god I hover over it.
So Bacchus hung where Ariadne lay ;
So Ariadne unto Bacchus' arms
Gave her white breasts with upward streaming eyes.
And me, though mortal, the swift flame devours,
And winds with sparkles of immortal heat
In my quick veins, and finds sweet pasture there.
Alas, her parted lips, how still they smile !
Her soft, immobile face, her calling gaze !
Now from me fall the whole world's memory,
And hang henceforth, my thoughts, your starlight here !
What art thou, — speak ! — like Aphrodite lying,

In mystery clad and raiment of desire?
Yet speak not ; so thy silence is more sweet
Even than thy song, I would not have thee speak.
Still as the light that streams from thee, gaze on,
Sunning thy treasures in thy tresses' gold !
O, thou art lovely, maiden, thou art fair,
But to be loved is more than to be fair.
Lift up thy eyes to mine, look with the soul,
And in light reach me !

[*The PHANTASM reveals itself. AGATHON starts back,
and the PHANTASM changes, sinking, as the cave
darkens.*

'Tis not thee, not thee !
It is not thee I serve ! O thou one face
That art the sweetness of my thousand dreams,
Beam on me, and uncharm these hoodless orbs !
Ah, base, base, base ! I saw the nether fire
Dilated glow, with expectation ripe,
The brutish spark ! O Eros, art thou gone ?
Didst thou not mark it, like a meteor globed,
Glance down the blue rift and low-eddyding gleam
Deep-whirled ? And in its fiery womb I saw
The twisted serpent ringing woe obscene,
And far it lit the pitchy ways of hell !

Alas, that horror ! Eros, Eros, Eros —
I cannot find thee. [AGATHON *falls*.

EROS *sings*

In waste places of the night
Joy once wandered out of light,
And when he parted thence on high
The Desolation heard her first-born's cry ;
Yet another birth was nigh,
Hell-engendered, lean and scant,
In the starvèd womb of Want.
Eros, born the elder, I ;
Anteros, he ; at one same birth
Nourished at the breasts of Dearth.
Oft our pathways cross on earth,
Though we seek a different goal,
For the way lies through the soul.
Oft he wrestles, might and main,
To break the palm-branch in my hand ;
In the torch-race oft doth strain
To quench in dust my burning brand ;
But my strength from heaven derives,
Victor stays, howe'er he strives.

Another fortune with the sons of men
His hazardous encounter hath ;
Safer the Lernæan den,
Or old Scylla's toothèd wrath,
To wayfarer or helmsman of the wave ;
So many thousands find in him the grave.
By avenues of soft approach,
And fair delights to high-placed fortune due,
Upon prosperity doth he encroach ;
Seeming all sympathy and sorrow true,
With wretchedness its fallen pride doth rue,
And some poor betterment as falsely show ;
But all in general wreck doth ever overthrow.
So fond is man, though seeming wise,
From his own heart to spin fair lies,
And, by himself deluded, worst slavery to endure ;
Nor any truth were now kept bright and pure,
Nor for a single hour
Were man secure
Against that secret, sullen, undermining tide,
But, to my strength allied,
Love stoops from heaven, clad in dismaying power.
Foolish they are who think him soft.
The Avenger he !

His cloudless throne
Oft sends the thunder down
On mortals ; as when Zeus aloft
Is angered in his heart to see
Some insolent lord to fulness blown —
Instant of the Thunderer aware,
Under his golden seat
The wingèd terror at his feet,
Eagle of god, sun-nurtured, fierce for prey,
Flashes on the storming cloud
With beak thrust out and riding pinions loud ;
Sees, and plunges from the air,
And, darkening the blaze of day,
Swoops the offended law ;
And on the race of men beholding falleth awe.
Or like to him heroic song once saw
Leave his bright station on Olympus' crown,
To Ida coming ; terrible the clang
Of the full quiver on his armèd shoulders rang ;
Terrible the bowstring sang ;
Like night the mighty arrow sprang ;
First on beasts, and then on men ;
Pestilence did the armies pen ;
With funeral pyres

The wide camp smokes and death-choked fires.

Such things the poets feign
Of god-inflicted pain ;
But to the inner eye
Secret that force and nigh ;
In the blood implicate,
In nerve and bone
The burning serpent, in the heart a stone,
Invisible fate
Astonishes, struck with internal rout,
The body's faculties, and puts them out ;
Dries up the vital lamp ;
Dissolves the mind's own harmony ;
Lets madness in, and uncontrollèd be ;
Dismantles virtue's hold ;
Uncasts, imperial wreck, reason's large mould ;
And in the soul
Unmints the image of its heavenly stamp ;
Erases and abolishes the whole.
O ruin absolute, and not to be withstood
By the frail mortal brood !
Avenging Love ! O, terrible
The brightness of thy burning stroke
Illumes the darkness when the victim falls !

One moment on his eyeballs broke
The whole eternal fabric, heaven and hell,
Thy glory, unsearchable,
And oft then first descried
When to the light he died !
Yet not to darkness left,
And utterly bereft,
If any soul be capable of light ;
For He, who framed man at His will,
Did in the inward parts distil
Such sensible, ethereal force,
That there immortal sorrows course,
Not fatal, but with issues bright ;
Woes of the heart unburdening
That fondly to this mould will cling ;
Pangs of the spirit when it dies,
Yet strives on thoughts of heaven to rise.
O one true sacrifice !
Where never incense upward clomb
Of holocaust or hecatomb,
The lone heart shall His secrecy surprise
Far in the unapparent skies.
For who hath once known light within,
And entered on heaven's pilgrimage,

The under-world, whence souls begin,
Shall nevermore his steps engage ;
Though oft he suffer pain,
In peril seeming lost,
On darkness tost,
He shall be found again,
Light shall to him return.
So into safety brought,
And hardly taught
That souls most beautiful are framed most stern,
Seeing the black and Stygian flood
Redden, beneath Love's shafts, in seas of blood,
And, livid with lightnings of his flame,
Sink whence it came,
Leaving its wrecks along the mortal shore,
With wiser praise
He shall the pæan raise,
And Love, the Avenger, sing, who saves him, evermore.

[AGATHON *wakes.*

AGATHON

And art thou here ? and dost thou love me still,
As when thou didst confide thyself to me ?
Then leapt my heart up at thy darling name,

That slipped on that dark air, as slips a star ;
But whether more of mystery or of light
It yields, beauty or sorrow has, who knows ?
O, yet one moment in the darkness here
Bend thy full soul on mine ! So lovers' eyes
Gaze on each other lost, and suffer all !

EROS

The cords of birth do not so strictly bind,
The bonds of Nature are less absolute
Than our communion : be not thou afraid ;
I cannot leave thy side until the soul
That passions in thee gives me to my peace ;
Only through thee I come unto the gods.

AGATHON

I know how strong are forged love's bright links
Where virtue is, and truth, and innocence ;
My heart has no such metal ; and thou, alas,
How near thy eyes see my mortality !

EROS

Be not distrustful, nor with shame o'ercome
Whom sin o'ercame not ; in thy secrecy,
All bare and open to the god's pure sight,

And naked as the desert to the sun
He every part surveys, there truest known
Where light is most ; for oft dishonored here,
Defeated and given o'er (since wisest men
Discern but little in another's life,
And scarce themselves dare judge), the soul stands there
In garlanded and sweet-hymned victory,
Lovely, and oft majestic after pain.
It is the fool that judges ; so judge not thou,
But rather from the judgments of high heaven
Bethink thee how to pluck eternal law.
Let not dejection on thy heart take hold
That Nature hath in thee her sure effects,
And beauty wakes desire. Should Daphne's eyes,
Leucothea's arms and clinging white caress,
The arch of Thetis' brows, be made in vain?
Beauty is universal nature's lure ;
The gods themselves from beauty seek increase ;
The fiery soul is natured like the gods,
And hath like motions, and therein is fixed
Immortal generation : whence in it
Creative passion and divine desire
That suffer not to mate with mortal things,
But beauty equal to eternal date

It seeks, and finds it in the virgin soul.
Love giveth not his flame to rosy cheeks,
Nor to the oratory of bright eyes
Yields his commission up, nor to the lips
That breathe his vows renders his constancy ;
But where the spirit within doth live insphered
In noble thoughts, fair actions, and kind words,
He is enthroned, with mutual hearts conjoined
In virtue, courtesy, and married lives
That so uniting more with heaven unite.
He is not fit to love that knows not this.

AGATHON

This was the beam that chastened my young eyes
In early visitation found and loved,
And beauty's first surprisal ; loving it,
That love in me conquered the lower love.
Yet something will intrude ; though found at last,
That dear response and union of the soul,
Though held secure against time's disarray,
(So clearer shines the eternal ornament,)
Death snatches all, and bears it underground,
Where weeps Persephone, and at the gates
The golden lute of Orpheus shattered lies.

EROS

The wisest doctrine darkens near the grave ;
On Nature and thy frame of mystery
Where truth works nearest, ground thy faith the same.
Nature seeks only life ; where vigor is
Beauty implants and joy, that measure life
Flowing and ebbing ; thence her art secretes
The loaded seeds and vessels of her force
Ere falls the prime in ugliness and pain,
Death incomplete, and ashy death at last ;
She with new bursts mocks mutability,
And stays her shifting empire. In fair things
There is another vigor, flowing forth
From heavenly fountains, the glad energy
That broke on chaos, and the outward rush
Of the eternal mind ; and as they share
In this they to the soul are beautiful.
It bendeth not, nor lower will converse
Than with that perfect and eternal being
Which beauty portions ; hence the poet's eye
That mortal sees creates immortally
The hero more than men, not more than man,
The type prophetic ; hence in marble shines
The god, but never down Olympus' slopes

Nor in Idalian meadows stepped so proud
In grace, joy, love, beauty, and majesty.
Thus beauty, as the Graces throwing gifts
On Aphrodite make her visible,
Endues immortal substance and unveils
The bright original, in all things bright,
But only in the reason seen divine,
And there adored in present deity.
And dream not this the dreaming of the mind.
The soul hath its own order, and its laws,
Strict in its element as Nature's bond,
Are heavenly regents of its destined course ;
They bend the future to the thing to be,
And in the accomplished hour disburden fate.
Wisdom is but their foretaste ; obeying them,
(And what is virtue but obeying them ?)
Thou leaguest with heaven's will, its nursling thou,
And of its purposes the choicest part ;
So shall thy soul be grappled round with fate,
And on the centre stayed thy fabric stand.
To trust thyself is half thy victory :
The soul that doubteth, it doth daily die,
Thou knowest ; and clearer proof to thee I bring,
The light and language in thyself o'erheard,

Showing the way and passport to the god.
Thou knowest it the circle of thy wits —
From beauty all things have their origin ;
In virtue permanence ; consummation seek
Only in love ; thy soul the witness is.

AGATHON

Glimpses at times the heavenly spark in me
Hath shed, nor now first heard I know the soul.
But O, too feeble faith is, self-derived,
Self-seeking, on the little round of self
Narrowly based ! but rather unto Truth,
As to Parnassus' bare and calling height,
Should leap the bright ascent ; or as the sun,
His burning rays advancing gloriously,
Moves with immeasurable azure sphered
And golden empire of his unbraved beam,
The soul should make the heaven through which it moves
And in its own light chariot its course.
Is there no other Way?

EROS

Another Way there is,
So have I heard ; not yet the gates unlock.
And O, not thine the praise, dear Mount of Joy,

Seems truth most native to his breast who loves
And knows what Love is. I did praise him once ;
Called him the youngest of the gods ; most blest ;
The tenderest ; the nestler in soft hearts ;
Most just, who neither does nor suffers wrong ;
The bravest, Ares' tamer ; in temperance first,
Who ruleth all desires, all passions quells ;
The best beloved, darling of gods and men.
Before he came in heaven were chains and wounds,
Revolts, dethronements, mutilations, wrecks,
Old realms defrauded and the new defiled,
Necessity's hard reign ; but he brought in
Sweetness and peace, and in smooth order set
The empire of the gods, and gave them gifts :
The throne to Zeus and to the Muses song ;
Apollo's healing and divining art,
Hephæstus' forge, Athene's loom, thank him ;
Out of his loins is every good thing sprung ;
Inventor and inspirer, wise in works ;
Suggester of fair shapes ; persuasion's lips ;
The poet whose touch makes all men poets be,
And hearts that had no music breathe it forth ;
And fame he gives, making all art beloved.
He fills men with affection, voids their hate ;

He maketh them to meet at friendly feasts,
At sacrifice and dance, the priest, the lord ;
Kindness supplies, unkindness banishes ;
Friendship he gives, and forgives enmity ;
Joy of the good and wonder of the wise,
The gods' amazement ; most desired by those
Who have him not, and precious unto whom
He is their better part ; softness and grace,
Delicacy, luxury, fondness, and desire,
His children are ; he's careful of the good,
But of the evil mindeth not at all ;
In every word and deed, in hope and fear,
The pilot, comrade, helper, saviour, he ;
The glory of the gods, the praise of men,
The leader best and brightest ! in choral march
Let each man in his footsteps following tread,
And honoring him sing sweetly the sweet strain
With which Love charms the souls of gods and men !

EROS

Fragrant thy praise is and immortal-hymned ;
This breath of thine, this little golden breath,
When Athens lies behind like Babylon,
Shall be love's censor ! Delphi shall be mute,

Athene's wisdom oracled in stone
Be shattered ; in another country then
(Though desert now and roaring seas between)
Thou shalt be loved ; such charm the Muses give.
But look lest thou their bright occasions lose.
The poet's heart is a wise counsellor ;
O — for thou canst — invoke Urania now,
That she through song may yield thee thy desire.

AGATHON sings

Muse of the eternal tune,
O'erhead in Nature's starry rune ;
Whom mortals in themselves discern
By thoughts that from thy fingers burn ;
 And the heart divinely falls
 To native hymns and madrigals !

Thou, the Wisdom of the sphere,
Whom most by inward sight we fear,
Since souls o'erwrought through thee may pierce
The violet-girdled universe ;
 And the truth to us be given
 With the shining 't hath in heaven !

Sacred passion seizes me
Through love of the divinity ;
Oft upon my eyelids stream
Bright visions of thy borrowed beam ;
Hear, and have me in thy grace ;
Thee I implore to see Love's face !

URANIA, *unseen*

To man's spirit-visioned eye,
As the robeless world doth lie
To the sun when clouds disperse,
Unsheltered lies the universe.
Hoar Nature's solitary heir,
He looks on earth and sea and air ;
Thought's empire-making word he wills,
The great domain responsive thrills ;
Break from the bases of the earth
The fire-scrawled legends of their birth ;
Flash sun and planet, wheel in wheel,
Nor dare the central poise conceal ;
And dateless stars of Chaldee stay
His subtler influence to obey.
The viewless pulses of keen force

Traverse their ethereal course ;
Beneath his eye their films withdraw ;
He sees the essences of law.
What he knows a fragment is
Of what destiny maketh his ;
Even beyond hope's climbing border
Unknown worlds shall Science order ;
Her dominions distance far
The lone ray of the outer star.

Yet to her is set a bound,
Nor words divine by her are found.
Nature will not cast for thee
The starry robe of deity.
Mortal, rack her nerves no more,
Nor in her frame the god explore !
Her tongues of fire forget the word
In star-song nor in sea-chime heard,
Nor on Dodona's sacred breeze.
Go, sift with light the Pleiades ;
And clothe anew the fossil bone ;
Of force, resolve the monotone ;
Weigh, number, chart, infer, and sum —
Not from without the god will come.
Never through the senses' portal

Gleamed that Power, of all the source,
The large-libertied Immortal
Who inhabits Fate and Force.
Nature has no path to him,
But rather shows man, dumb and dim,
Back to himself her mazes wind
And laws of things are laws of mind.
He the conscious Being only
Of the world whereon he gazes ;
He the sceptred sovereign lonely
In whose state its glory blazes !

Yet, look home : there shalt thou find,
Orb in orb, eternal mind.
Nought is knowledge but the light
Unsealing thy immortal sight.
Nought is beauty but the eye
Led captive by divinity.
For truth divine is life, not lore,
Creative truth, and evermore
Fashions the object of desire
Through love that breathes the spirit's fire.
It loves, and loving grows more bright,
And, changing to its own delight,
Doth ever in itself express

And image the god's loveliness.
Love beauty, and thy soul grows fair ;
Love wisdom, virtue harbors there ;
Love love, the god thou canst not miss —
Within thy heart his secret is.
The spark within, the self-fed flame,
From those twin hands of blessing came,
That cast the massy earth's blue round
And in man's bosom virtue found.
Thy acre of eternal fate
Is broad enough to bear thy weight ;
Take thou the scope the god doth give,
And fear not from the heart to live !
Behold the sacred words I sing
Are but thy spirit laboring :
So near the nameless mystery lies,
Revealed, though hidden, to thy eyes ;
The vision seen, its form and light
Are only with thy shining bright ;
Unveiling him, I unveil thee,
And bare thy inmost privacy.

[AGATHON, *entranced, sinks as in sleep.*

EROS sings

Trancèd now his eyelids be
Seals of light and secrecy ;
Slumber, poet, and still keep
Golden vigils in thy sleep,
And, waking, bring the world divine
Through thy opening eyes to shine !

Now I leave mortality ;
This dear heart has set me free,
Through the sacred passion burning
That denotes his home-returning,
Where the gods in joy recline,
And the sphere is all divine.
Here I scatter ere I go
Thoughts that in white lilies blow,
Hopes that in sweet violets breathe,
Memory, the starred moss beneath ;
These for Agathon shall be
Wreaths of earthly victory.
But to heaven I ascend,
And better there the soul befriend,
With the glad gods interceding,
Till again my pinions greet
The young hearts that love my leading,

Dear as Hermes' ivory feet
Down the purple ether steering,
To the souls in prison nearing,
With the holy meadow's bloom ;
I shall touch them in the gloom,
And, starlike, from my bending eyes,
The sweet beam of divine surprise
Shall in a moment teach them more
Than all the worlds of light before.

SCENE III

DIOTIMA's *cave; dawn without.*

AGATHON *wakes.* DIOTIMA *beside him*

DIOTIMA

Canst thou interpret this?

AGATHON

O prophetess,
Thou knowest ; this rock was riven in twain,
And over me the glistening purple deep,
Sparkling with starry hosts, began to pale
With morning, and the sleeping vales beneath
Broke into thousand shadows, violet-winged,
That in their motions died, and gleaming hills
Unbosomed their fair slopes unto the east
That molten burned ; then from that cloudless throne
Light issued like a pillar of burning gold
Sea-based ; and Phosphor in the rosy flush
Folded the stars upon the hills of dawn.

New earth, new heavens ! Never land I saw
That promised roving in such pastures sweet
Since through the woods that front the sacred dawn
I came, and music in my heart was born,
And at my feet broke the deep sea of song.
And One whose presence left the orient bare,
Came ; of the image that my soul had stamped
This was the living and god-motioned form.
O mortal speech, how truth disdaineth thee,
The dark confuser ! Beautiful he stood —
The feet that never wandered from the god,
The eyes that yet remembered heavenly light ;
His form advanced still sang his joyful speed ;
And in his hand I marked a laurel branch.
I was o'erawed, and darkly in that morn
I felt the nearer hovering of his plumes ;
He struck me with the laurel, face and lips,
And low upon my spirit borne I heard —
Not silence, nor in words of mortal speech —
“ I am the angel of the god thou wouldest ;
Love am I called, one name in heaven and earth ;
And thee through me He chooses : lift up thy heart
High as His will whose hope abides in thee ;
Know thou His mercy justifies His choice.”

And sleep a thousandfold had sealed my eyes.
Yet feel I on my cheeks the laurel burn.

DIOTIMA

The gods have been with thee : obey the gods !

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